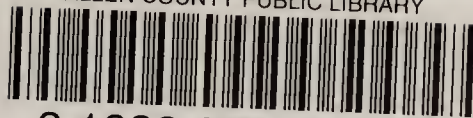


Thetford Academy's
First Century

Mary B. Slade

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BURTON HALL (built in 1845)

CLASSROOM BUILDING (built in 1818)

Printed directly from an old wood cut. The round imperfection is caused by
a knot in the wooden block.

THETFORD ACADEMY'S FIRST CENTURY

1819-1919

by

MARY B. SLADE



Published by

Thetford Academy Historical Committee

Thetford, Vermont



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DEDICATION

With gratitude to my family for their interest and aid in producing THIS BOOK, I dedicate it to the memory of the gallant founders of Thetford Academy, and to those who, from time to time, have accomplished its rebirth.

MARY B. SLADE





FAIR THETFORD

WORDS BY Edith McDuffie, 1892

TUNE: *Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms*

Fair Thetford! Fair hill where the hills circle round,
We are singing, loved Thetford, of thee,
For we love every inch of thy proud classic ground,
'Tis no matter where'er we may be.
Thy mountains are blue in thy bright sunset's glow,
E'en the sunsets of Italy pale.
Thy breezes bring courage wherever they blow,
Fair Thetford, loved Thetford, all hail!

To stand with thy sons is to stand with the strong,
'Tis to mingle with those of true worth.
Thy sons and thy daughters are scattered afar,
They have borne thy rich gifts to the earth.
But home in our hearts, very truly we know,
Know that some who are valiant for truth
Look back, in the days of their proudest success,
To the lessons thou gavest in youth.

We care not what others may think or may do,
O we care not what others may say,
For we know that our places are kept for us there,
Although far from the hilltop we stray.
But, oft, ere we wake at the bird's morning call,
We'll be dreaming, loved Thetford, of thee,
And still we will sing when the night shadows fall,
Fair Thetford, loved Thetford, for me!



History - - the unfolding panorama of human endeavor.—Huden

PREFACE

A HISTORY OF THETFORD ACADEMY has been long overdue. All Vermont towns had a period of settlement, followed by the organization of a church and establishment of primitive district schools, but not all towns founded an early school for subjects beyond the three Rs. Of those that did, Thetford is one of two which have managed to retain a school in its original form, the other one being Peacham.

Yet in the long years between the founding and the 1940s there had been no effort to recover the history of the Thetford school except for an address delivered at the 75th anniversary meeting in 1894. That, however, was the brief effort of a busy man and occupied only thirty pages in the report of the meeting.

In the meantime much had happened since 1894. A young principal had come early in the school's second century who was to make his task the occasion of a career, rather than a short period of earning money as had too frequently been the practice. Under the increasing aid of the State and the Nation he was not only preparing students for advanced study, but was offering strong and attractive courses in agriculture and home-making, and encouraging athletics for both boys and girls.

A new era had begun and it seemed desirable that the new generations should know and appreciate the trials and achievements of the earlier ones. But where was the material? Important records had been destroyed and others had never been committed to paper. However, one could begin with the known, hoping to penetrate the unknown.

In presenting this brief history the viewpoint of "human endeavor" has been chosen because it is essentially a story of people. Confronted with a compelling social need which none but themselves could satisfy, a group of exceptionally intelligent villagers organized and contributed whatever they had, land, lumber, labor, or a small amount of money, and solved their own problem with the aid of their capable pastor.

To understand their problem it must be borne in mind that they were people of the early nineteenth century who had migrated to a comparatively new land. Little money existed, universal education was only a dream, and they often had differing ideas on many subjects. But they were united in their desire that their children, and those of their neighbors, should be taught more than the three Rs of the district schools. A few towns were experimenting with academies and "Select Schools", but theirs was not to be a select school. It was to be a Thetford school and those whom they called "indigent students" were to be welcomed and aided.

The unfolding story will reveal that the school was conceived earlier than the date which is generally accepted. The founding has been popularly placed in 1819, the date of the opening. But if we consider the founding as accomplished by the organization of trustees, the date must be moved back, certainly to 1818, and probably to 1817.

It has taken more than a decade to gather this rather meager material. The 75th anniversary report has been useful, especially for the Orcutt period. Identification of the principals extended over a long period and but for the anniversary list many would have been lost, as they are seldom mentioned in records. Taking that list as a partial guide, it was necessary to verify them by hunting for their college records.

Those from Dartmouth presented few difficulties and most of the others were found in Eastern colleges. Sometimes, however, a lengthy search was necessary, as in the case of Franklin Westfall, a search ending happily one summer day when an attractive young man appeared

at my door. He was touring New England, and he had been told that his grandfather Westfall had once taught in Thetford Academy. Westfall had received a degree from the University of Indiana, but many letters would have been necessary to trace him there.

Other fortuitous items have come to me. A letter from Chicago to the local postmaster inquired whether the school still existed, and if so, would there be an interest in letters from students of a century earlier. Those letters provided the story of the unfortunate lamp episode of 1855. An aged lady of Hanover, the seat of Dartmouth College, directed my attention to the tale of Henry Stowe. Only one person has been found in Thetford who knew of it.

Collecting catalogues has had its difficulties, and there may be more of them than are now known. A history of the school would be barren indeed without the thirty which have been found. Early commencement programs were completely elusive for a long time. But a student of the 1850s, who had gone to the middle West, had valued the catalogues and programs of his time so highly that he had them bound in a large volume, together with those of contemporary Dartmouth. This bulky and well-thumbed volume fell to his eastern daughter who kindly offered it for the Thetford collections.

There are many gaps in this brief history which should be filled, and I earnestly hope and expect that a more complete one will be published, certainly by 2019, which will be the 200th anniversary of the opening. In preparation for that event, or happily an earlier one, I hereby urge those who have additional knowledge of the school and its students to send it to the secretary of the trustees for filing. Details of the founding may be hiding in some old letter or document. Even small items may be important and will be lodged in the fire-proof room which is being prepared by Academy authorities. Errors which may have crept into these pages may be corrected in the same way.

A General Catalogue of faculty and students is desirable, giving full vital and educational statistics. Few assis-

tant teachers have been identified. Thetford's twin, Kimball Union Academy, long ago compiled such a catalogue under the same difficulties which would attend such an effort by Thetford.

A subject which should be investigated is the founding of schools in the opening West and South by Thetford students. A prospectus of an early school in Indiana, opened by a Thetford couple, is practically a copy of Hiram Orcutt's catalogues of the 1850s. The University of Florida, at Gainesville, developed from a school opened by two T. A. young men of the same period. The founding of Wabash College in Indiana has been noted in my text.

A list of the individuals who have aided me in making this history possible is too long to include here but I hold them in grateful remembrance. Transportation to research centers, provided by friends and neighbors, has been indispensable. First and foremost among the research centers has been the Dartmouth College library where the service, especially by the archivists, was cordially and continuously given. The various histories of the College have been valuable in revealing the atmosphere of the region, and I have been fortunate in having the service of the Dartmouth Photographic Bureau whose work has added greatly to the value of this book.

I have had the same cooperation from the State and Historical libraries at Montpelier, and Oberlin College gave special permission to quote from its history of 1943.

Those who read drafts of my manuscript, including the Director of the Vermont Historical Society, Dr. Arthur W. Peach, and three members of the Board of Curators, Harold G. Rugg, Associate Librarian at Dartmouth, Prof. Leon W. Dean and Dr. John C. Huden of the University of Vermont, gave needed encouragement. Nearer home, the same sympathetic aid has been extended by the principal of the academy, Carl A. Anderson, and Mrs. Anderson, and also by members of the Board of Trustees.

As I write I can see from my window the new Thetford Academy class building, and the still newer gymnasium, erected upon land cleared by an early settler of the town and bequeathed to the school by a representative of another early family. The location could hardly be better, being slightly outside the village and having the range of eastern hills in full view. The old school is still attracting friends, doubtless drawn partly by its indomitable will to live which has been fostered by officers and alumni, and especially by the beloved principal of the last three decades. But that is another story and belongs in that perhaps-not-so-far-away second history of Thetford Academy.

Mary B. Slade.

Thetford, September, 1955.



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Chapter I

THE SCENE — 1818

I

IN THE SECOND DECADE of the nineteenth century a group of men in and near a hamlet of sixteen houses on a Vermont hilltop was earnestly considering a project which would require vision and courage. It was a remarkable group for such a small place, including, as it did, merchants or “traders”, lawyers, a doctor, a tavern keeper, the postmaster, a farmer, and their pastor. The period following the war of 1812 was a time of rapid change and expansion known later as the Era of Good Feeling. Population and wealth were increasing and a deeper national consciousness was developing. The quickening was taking many forms, among which benevolent enterprises were prominent. These men, responsive to the times, and especially aware of the need of their own community, were eagerly devising a plan to provide an education beyond that which the primitive district school could offer.

The township of Thetford, six by seven miles in area, had received its charter in 1761 from the province of New Hampshire in the name of King George the Third. In 1818 it had thus entered its second half-century, having attained a population of about nineteen hundred. The early years of its first half-century had been stormy ones. In 1764 the town had passed, against its will, to the Province of New York. In 1777, in the midst of the Revolution, it had found itself a part of the daring independent republic of Vermont; and in 1791 it took its place in the new nation when Vermont became the fourteenth state of the Union.¹

The struggles accompanying these changes, together with the problems of pioneering and of two wars, had

given Vermonters a character of their own. Feeling entirely capable of managing their own affairs, they had developed a marked individualism. Nearly all of them had come from Connecticut, which had been one of the most independent spots in the world, but they had early surpassed that colony in democratic action by adopting manhood suffrage² and excluding slavery in 1777.³ Having lived through pioneer days when money was practically non-existent, they often appeared to be shrewd and "close-fisted", and with the coming of more prosperous times they had been much occupied in acquiring what was known as "property".

Religion was scarcely second to property, and in Thetford a church had early been organized. A log meeting house was built by the town which was soon outgrown, and a more substantial one was erected in 1787. After much dissension it had been placed, by a court decision, on the top of Thetford Hill, which then had but one settler, but was found to be the center of travel for the other settlers of the town. A green, or common, was laid out around the meeting house and soon a few additional families came, the meeting house acting as a magnet.

At first the houses were placed around the common after the fashion of earlier New England villages,⁴ but later they had gradually followed a primitive road toward the south. By 1818 there were enough of them to be called a village, in the New England sense,⁵ the only point in the township which could then be so designated.

The meeting house was also the "town house" and symbolized the life of the town. From its pulpit doctrines were expounded, rules of conduct laid down, reproofs administered; and tithing men walked its aisles. On weekdays were heard the debates, and often the disputes, of the frequent town meetings, and there votes were cast for town and state officers. Outside had stood the stocks and the whipping post, visible warnings to evil-doers.

Until after the turn of the century the town had been largely self-sustaining. A few traders had transported

potash, lumber products, and whatever the farmers could spare, "down country" by flat boats and rafts, and brought back such necessary commodities as salt, molasses, and bar iron. Business was carried on principally by barter, and little money was in circulation.

If a man raised his own bread stuffs, his meat, butter and cheese, wool and flax, horses and oxen, lumber and fuel, and his maple sugar, and was allowed to pay part of his taxes with grain or cattle, he could live comfortably with little money. Nails were made on the Hill from the iron which was brought in, the hides of his cattle were tanned there, saw and grist mills were but a mile away, and these services were often exchanged for labor or goods. The neighbors helped at harvest time and the housewives did the spinning and weaving.

But by 1818 small industries were springing up in Thetford. The tax list for 1820 shows blacksmiths, shoemakers, carpenters and cabinetmakers, tanners, mills for carding and fulling of cloth, and for linseed oil, besides the early grist and saw mills. Frame houses were now the rule, and more land was being cultivated. Roads were improving, but for a century would be almost impassable in mud-time.

In 1818 Monroe was President. The West was opening, and a few Thetford families had already migrated to the Mohawk Valley and to Ohio. But the West did not mean what it does in the twentieth century. The United States extended only to the Rocky Mountains; and, in the South, Florida was to be purchased in the very year of the opening of Thetford Academy. There were but twenty states, and some of them had not yet achieved white manhood suffrage.

Slavery was becoming an issue, politically and morally, and the famous compromise over the admission of Missouri as a state was soon to be adopted. There was fear of war with European countries, and the President, with the counsel of Jefferson, who was still living, was soon to issue the message known as the Monroe Doctrine, which said in effect, "Hands off."

The problem of transportation was becoming acute. Private turnpikes still connected important places, and it

required three days to travel from Boston to New York by stage. The canal was the latest mode of travel, and small ones had been constructed on the Connecticut River, which bordered Thetford, to enable the flatboat traders to pass the various falls on their way to Connecticut markets. The Erie Canal, which was to aid many Thetford families to migrate to the West, was only partly constructed. Railroads were scarcely dreamed of.

From early days the dominant personality in the town had been Asa Burton⁶. The first pastor, supported by a town tax rate, had come in 1773, and because of his Loyalist sentiments, had fled at the beginning of the Revolution. In 1779 the twenty-six-year-old Burton had been ordained as the second pastor. Born in Connecticut, he was of the same stock as the Thetford settlers. As a boy of fourteen he had come with his pioneer parents to Norwich, adjoining Thetford, growing to manhood there in the land-clearing, log-cabin period. With severe self-denial, he had attended the new Dartmouth College at Hanover, across the river, and was graduated in 1777. After some theological study, he had been settled in Thetford for life, which was then the custom.

He was given fifty acres of land for a farm, and a house was built, partly by his own labor. Here the bride of his youth and her two children had died; a second wife had died, leaving a daughter; and a third wife had come, who was, he said, "a great comfort and blessing" in his approaching old age. Here he composed two weekly sermons, many funeral sermons, two "Election Sermons" delivered before the General Assembly,⁷ and the book with the long title, "Essays in Some of the First Principles of Metaphysics, Ethics and Theology", which was to give him a place in the history of psychology.⁸

From this house he had set out on many journeys by horseback, and later by chaise, to Burlington for University trustee meetings and commencements; to Middlebury for the same purposes, and to receive the degree of Doctor of Divinity; to innumerable councils and ordinations throughout New England; and to catechise schools at home. He said,

I judged & I believe rightly, that my labors would be the most useful among the Youth, I preached much on the importance of having good schools, & giving children a good education.

He was now in his middle sixties, a man of strong and unchanging convictions. Theologically he was a Calvinist, a term which had several shades of meaning in New England, but with agreement on fundamental principles. The earliest existing covenant of the Thetford church, probably written by him, calls attention to "the lost and guilty state and condition" of man, and to the

utter inability to help ourselves by anything we can possibly do except to depend upon divine Grace and help, and to renounce henceforth and forever, the World, ye flesh and the Devil.⁹

And the Articles of Discipline declare that

every particular church of Christ is a court erected by Him and in His kingdom for the purpose of carrying the laws of His kingdom into execution among themselves.¹⁰

These laws were to be found in Matthew 18: 15-18.

The great changes in thought which were to affect much that Asa Burton earnestly believed to be true, were not yet in sight. But it sometimes seemed that he almost caught glimpses of later conceptions of the nature and the origin of man, although he had no scientific basis for developing his ideas. He saw

the analogy apparent in all the works of God. The natural world was governed by a few simple, established laws. And all the different ranks of living beings were formed according to one general plan And between animals and man there was an evident analogy.

He had lived through the stirring days of the Revolution and the founding of the Republic, and was now in the midst of adjustments which were in progress between the new political parties. Like most Calvinist clergymen he had accepted the views of the Federalists. They were the conservatives of their day, and they feared Jefferson's liberal political ideas¹¹, and disapproved of his liberal religious views.

In 1818 the Thetford church, which had become one of the largest and most influential in the young state,

was recovering from an upheaval which well illustrates both the party animosity of the time and the watchfulness of the church over the opinions of its members. The lone householder on Thetford Hill when the meeting house was built had been Beriah Loomis, who became, Dr. Burton said,

a person of more influence in the Church than any other individual it is well known that the inhabitants through all the states have imbibed different sentiments ever since Jefferson was chosen president the parties were known by the name of federalists & republicans This town had been generally federable till the year 1812. We had been happily united in our political creed.

But republicanism had begun to creep in, and the State was electing Republican officials. Deacon Loomis embraced these more liberal views and soon became so ardent that, quoting Dr. Burton, .

his warmth & zeal to maintain his party arose to such a height, that it appeared to him an almost unpardonable crime for anyone to say or do anything against his party He said that my preaching tended directly to destroy the liberties of the people, the constitution of the United States, to overthrow the government & ruin the nation, & that I do more mischief in the town than any other man in it, & that the influence of the federalists ought to be destroyed.

It appeared to Dr. Burton that "either all discipline must be given up, or that Deacon Loomis must be proceeded with as Christ directs." Accordingly he was brought to trial for "evil speaking", first before the local church, and later, in turn before two councils of men chosen from other churches. The people were divided in their opinions and "the town was kept in an uproar." The conflict, including the early stages when Loomis was excommunicated, lasted about three years, and was so fierce that at one time Dr. Burton "really feared that blood would be shed."

In the end, Deacon Loomis signed a confession, and the church voted to restore him to their charity.

All parties then agreed to say nothing to each other on the subjects which had so long agitated them, but bury them in

oblivion. Accordingly it was not long before
the Brethren walked together in love, harmony and peace.

Only those who know at first hand how intimately the people of a small country community live together will realize the effect which this affair between the two leading men of the church had upon their neighbors. And lest the novice in New England history might think that the situation was unusual, it should be added that such scenes were common. Dr. Burton said "I have been called in the course of my ministry to attend many councils where serious & alarming difficulties subsisted." Church discipline was considered necessary in order to "keep a church visibly clean & distinguish it as a city on a Hill from the world."

II

The village of Thetford Hill lies at a "crossroads". Shortly after the beginning of the century a path running north and south over the top of the hill had become part of the first post road in the town, and soon the few folded letters, without stamps, were brought in a saddle bag once a week. There was no stage over the Hill in 1818, and the tax records reveal that there were but five carriages in the town, three being on the Hill. Travelling, other than by stage, was usually by horseback, although the young and the vigorous often walked.

The village street was crude, with farm animals running at large, and fences surrounded the better houses. The elm trees, which were later to be one of the glories of the street, had not been planted, and if grass was kept short on the common, it was probably by the aid of the animals. Passing along the street might be seen men in blue homespun "frocks" reaching to the knees¹², and with two hundred and forty three oxen in the town, some of the men would doubtless be guiding ox teams. Horses were seldom used for farm labor, as they were then small and of light weight.

In the houses the old brick ovens and wide-mouthed fireplaces were still in use. If fires died, a spark was struck by a flint to ignite a bit of tow or decayed wood; or live coals could be brought from a neighbor. Candles

provided light, and most families kept time by means of a "noon mark" cut in some convenient place, a door step or a window sill. There were, however, seventeen "house clocks" in the town, three of them on the Hill. These were taxed as luxuries.

Monroe was the last president to wear the colonial knee breeches, with long white stockings and silver shoe-buckles, and his powdered hair tied in a queue. Probably some of the older and more dignified founders of the Academy still clung to these fashions for special occasions although they were being gradually replaced by long pantaloons and shortened hair.

With fuel for the cutting, substantial country food, plenty of cider, and some rum, there was much comfort. World events were relayed in weekly papers, and by travellers at the tavern, and with the affairs of the neighbors, the church, and the town, life could not have been dull.

A map (opp. p. 104) shows the neighborhood of this "remarkable group" in 1818¹³. Beginning at the northwest corner of the common, the first house was the home of Jedediah Buckingham. He had come from Lebanon, Connecticut, shortly before 1800 and was probably a man of more general culture than any other in Thetford. Lebanon had held a high position among Connecticut towns, and his social connections there had been notable. Since 1749 there had been a Social Library, sponsored by the educated men, among whom were Eleazer Wheelock, later the founder of Dartmouth College, and Jonathan Trumbull, the famous war governor of Connecticut¹⁴.

There had also been an academy which was notable for the number of men it had prepared for college. Usually men of the region went to Yale, but Buckingham had followed Eleazer Wheelock to Dartmouth, graduating in 1779, two years later than Asa Burton. He then read law with Judge Sylvester Gilbert of Hebron, Conn., and is said to have spent two years at the Inns of Court in London.

Why he chose to come to the young Vermont town is not clear, but he surely was acquainted with many of

the early Thetford families, most of whom had come from Hebron and Lebanon. He was somewhat more conservative than his Thetford neighbors, and acted occasionally as a stabilizer in town affairs. He had been a member of the Church of England, which had set him apart, since Calvinists and Episcopalians had not mixed easily in the town. Later he united with the Thetford church, thus becoming more completely identified with the community and showing an unusual degree of catholicity.

He was constantly concerned in town business, and served as representative to the General Assembly, on the Governor's Council, as Judge of the County Court, and as Judge of Probate. He had been one of the incorporators of Middlebury College, and had a private library, from which he loaned books to his neighbors and the nearby clergymen. In 1818 he was about sixty years of age.

In 1817 and 1818 Beriah Loomis was living in a little house south of Judge Buckingham's, which has long ago disappeared. He had come from Tolland, Connecticut, during the Revolution and had served with the Thetford Militia. He was a joiner, or carpenter, and had built, successively, three homes for himself on the Hill. Now, his large family having found new homes, he apparently was in reduced circumstances, and the little house was his refuge.

He had been a very active man. He had already been representative for eight sessions of the General Assembly, which convened annually at the time. He had also been Assistant Judge of the County Court, a member of the Vermont early Council of Censors, and later, of the Governor's Council. In 1791 he was a member of the Convention which had ratified the Federal Constitution when Vermont was admitted to the Union.

He also had a hand in nearly everything that went on in the town. One of the unsolved questions is how Judge-Squire-Deacon Loomis obtained his legal knowledge. Although he had not been admitted to the bar, apparently he had a firm grasp of the principles of law, and

probably possessed a small law library. Many small towns had such men, but he seems to have been exceptionally gifted. He was repeatedly chosen to manage important town affairs in spite of the fact that he was irascible, and sometimes erratic.

His wife was Asa Burton's cousin, and of their capable family, a son was graduated in 1811 from the new Military Academy at West Point. Another son, on record as teaching a district school in Thetford, later removed to Montpelier, the capital of the state, where he became Judge of the County Court and Judge of Probate. The daughters, unlike most country girls, did not marry locally, their marriages indicating a wider acquaintance than was usual. No clue has been found regarding the early education of these children. It probably had been accomplished largely at home.

Next, on the south, stood the home of Joseph Reed. It was originally larger than at this writing, the north third housing a store. Reed was of Massachusetts origin but had come to Thetford from Plymouth, New Hampshire, near the beginning of the century. He was a successful and somewhat shrewd trader and was also well versed in law, although without formal education. He had already been sent to the legislature five times, was Associate Judge of the County Court, and had been a delegate to the Vermont Constitutional Convention of 1814. His career thus partly paralleled that of Beriah Loomis. He is said to have been "a gentleman of the old school . . . and of wise and ample generosity." He was deeply interested in education and is known to have eventually helped more than twenty young men to attend college.

Continuing south, the Hopkins brothers occupied the next house, the lower north half containing a store. Thomas, the one who concerns us, had been brought up in luxury in Hartford, Connecticut, where his family had been wealthy merchants. Through a series of family troubles, he had been disinherited, and had come to Thetford to live with his brother, who had been one of the early traders of the town. Thomas had not expected to earn his living, but now made a definite place for him-

self in his new home, being much respected and having talents which were useful to the community. He especially excelled as a clerk, or secretary, and his exceptionally fine handwriting appears on many papers. He was town clerk for a long period, and his records are a joy to historians. He was also Thetford's first postmaster.

Although the merchants of the Hill were able to work together for benevolent causes, they seem to have had no hesitation in competing in business. About 1815 two enterprising young men appeared, apparently with some capital, and certainly with business ability. The Hopkins store had ceased to be important, but Joseph Reed was still active. Now the newcomers built another store on the opposite side of the street where they were to remain in business for a quarter of a century.

Captain William Harris Latham, known as Harris, had come from Lyme, across the river, where he had grown up in his father's trading business; and Dr. Thomas Kendrick, originally from Hanover, had married Latham's sister. Thus they were brothers-in-law, and besides the store, they proceeded to build a home on a brotherly plan, a double house, reaching north and south from a central wall or partition. This was on the lot next south of the Hopkins house. These men were in their early thirties, and were becoming prosperous and public spirited villagers. Dr. Kendrick had some medical training and his title was always used although apparently he did little practicing.

Next stood the attractive story-and-a-half cottage which Simeon Short was about to purchase. He had evidently lived elsewhere in the village for about two years, coming from Hartland, Vermont. He had been admitted to Dartmouth, but had been unable to carry out his plan for a college course. He had, however, covered part of the work by private instruction and had been admitted to the bar before coming to Thetford. He was already practicing, and soon became a judge of the Orange County Court. His devotion to the new school was to last throughout his life, which was to be a long one.

Orange Heaton had originally owned much of the land on the Hill, and some of the house lots had been taken from his tract. He had lived on several parts of it and was about to erect a substantial brick house. At the beginning of the Revolution he had come from Swanzey, New Hampshire, with his father, who was soon elected Captain of the Thetford Minute Men. From the age of sixteen, Orange had served in the war as a Minute Man, sometimes on guard at the river, where a continual watch was kept. He was now a prosperous farmer and land trader.

He had lost a promising son in the recent war, and was also in the midst of social troubles. Early uniting with the Thetford church, he had been one of a committee to "labor" with offenders against its rules. He became personally involved in a trial, and when called before the church, had refused to appear. The charges were that he had neglected to offer his youngest child for baptism, that he did not have family prayers, and that he had been heard to say that he never again would labor "with any offending brother or sister unless it be for some capital trespass, and that in his view will do more good than hurt." He was regarded as exhibiting an unchristian spirit, and was cut off "as a withered branch and a publican and a heathen", and excommunicated. He therefore was in disgrace in the eyes of Dr. Burton and the church. He was also in difficulty with Judge Buckingham and thereby in danger of imprisonment for debt, which was then a lawful penalty.

Continuing south, the last house in the village had been built and occupied by Oramel Hinckley, who had come from Lebanon, Connecticut, the home of Judge Buckingham. He had acquired a large amount of land in the locality and was probably the wealthiest man in the town. He had been admitted to the bar and possessed a library of ninety-five volumes. He died in 1811, but had he lived he undoubtedly would have been one of the founders of the academy, as he and his wife

gave very particular attention to the education of their children. It appeared to be their object to give them an

education which should render them both useful and respectable.¹⁵

In 1818 two of his sons were in Dartmouth, and he had earlier sent a young Negro servant there to attend the Indian Charity School which was connected with the college¹⁶. The Hinckley family had left the village before 1818 but had contributed to its culture. The farm which they had occupied and developed has special significance because it was to be bequeathed to the academy trustees a century and a quarter later, and was to be the site of the second class-room building.

Turning back to the north end of the common, James White occupied the original Loomis lot. He had been the second permanent settler on the Hill and seems to have held a place in the superior circle which had gathered there, although he was less active than the others. He was, however, a justice of the peace and the town treasurer for many years. He is named by Slafter¹⁷ as a probable original trustee of the school, but no proof has been found that this was true. However, his able family testifies to the cultivated atmosphere of his home. Two sons were graduated from Dartmouth before the days of the academy, another attended the medical school there, and a daughter and a granddaughter were to be successful teachers in the Thetford school.

The tavern stood at the crossroads. The tavern-keeper, Lyman Fitch, had come with his parents from Cornish, New Hampshire, in 1800. Tavern keepers were important when travel was slow, and even small villages provided a lodging place. The host was usually a genial and intelligent man, able to hold his own with all sorts of people. News was exchanged at the tavern, auctions and other gatherings were frequently held there, and there was a bar, for nearly all men drank some form of liquor. Lyman Fitch was also a joiner, a colonel in the militia, had been sent to the legislature once, and was to be chosen three times in the future for that honor. He was now in his late thirties, and had married a niece of Judge Buckingham, which added to his social standing. He already had five children waiting for the school.

In 1818 four men who are known to have been original trustees lived outside the village, one of whom was Asa Burton, but he was only a mile away and was about to remove to the Hill in order, he said, "to be nigher the church." His new home is indicated on the map. William Heaton, a brother of Orange, had lived a half mile off the Hill but had recently removed to the northern part of the town where Post's mills were attracting settlers because of the excellent water power there. Heaton was soon to be a justice and a prosperous merchant in the village which was developing. His descendants were to profit by the establishment of the school, down to the fifth generation.

Dr. Elijah Hammond lived about three miles to the southwest, near the point now called Rice's Mills. His training had been under Dr. John Crane, the earliest physician in Hanover, and he was not only a busy doctor, but had found time to serve as town clerk for a few years, and had been representative to the legislature for two sessions. That the honor of being town representative was closely contested is suggested by the list between 1800 and 1819. The sequence was Buckingham, Hammond, Buckingham, Fitch, Hammond, Reed, Loomis, and Reed¹⁸.

Timothy Phelps Bartholomew lived in the northeast part of the town, about three miles from the Hill. He was a "justice of the peace" and concerned in town activities. That he was prosperous is indicated by the fact that his farm contained more "improved" land than any other in the town. It was said of him that

he was one of the wisest of any age, discreet in counsel, just in his intercourse with men, . . . a protector and guide to the young, and many a penniless youth received his best inspirations under his roof, which was a free shelter to the homeless.¹⁹

Enumerating these men again will serve to recall their varied personalities: the pastor, Asa Burton; Judges Buckingham, Loomis, Reed, and lawyer Short; postmaster Hopkins; the merchants, Latham and Kendrick; the town treasurer, James White; the tavern keeper, Colonel Fitch; the merchant, William Heaton; Dr.

Hammond; and Justice Timothy Bartholomew. Orange Heaton was to occupy a place all his own, and Hinckley, who was no longer living, is, of course, omitted. Loomis, Latham and White are included only because Slafter named them, and their status will be discussed later. Of these fifteen men, only Burton and Buckingham were college graduates.

In an address to the school thirty years later, Simeon Short somewhat ambiguously said of the founders, "They were mostly men of high moral worth, sound religious principles and far-reaching views", adding that among them "stood first and foremost the venerable Doctor Burton."²⁰

It is surprising to discover that not one of these men was a native of Thetford. But the town was comparatively young. The older men had been late pioneers, or had come earlier as children, and the younger men had possibly judged that the central position of the Hill would command the trade and the patronage of the surrounding country. There was also a strong church, and every family, being of Puritan descent, would be attracted by a pastor of such excellence as Asa Burton.

Buckingham and Bartholomew were childless and in the future were to be devoted to education as a cause worthy of their disinterested service. The same was to be said of Short, although now, as a young man, he might reasonably hope that he would some time need the school. The children of Hammond, White and Loomis were beyond school age. Reed's two sons would soon be ready for the school. Some of the others had large families, Latham and Kendrick alone contributing twenty-five children to the roll of students as the years went by. Burton would welcome the school for his one daughter. In the school district, which extended to the farms beyond the village street, there were one hundred children of school age when the academy opened in 1819.

III

It is evident that there were men in the community centering on Thetford Hill who would perceive the need of an advanced school and who had ample qualifications

for founding one. The unqualified impression has prevailed in Thetford that the school was founded by the sudden impulse of one man. But before accepting this premise the gradual emergence in the surrounding country of a desire for greater educational advantages should be reviewed.

The settlers on the New Hampshire Grants, (the territory which is now Vermont), could not escape reminders of the desirability of schools. The charters of the early towns provided that one "share", amounting in Thetford to about three hundred and fifty acres of land, should be sequestered for the support of schools.²¹ And shortly after Vermont declared her independence in 1777, a plan for schools was incorporated in her first constitution, the model for which had been the constitution of Pennsylvania, thus partaking of "the political wisdom of William Penn and Benjamin Franklin" ²²

Thetford had anticipated the constitution, as a school-house is mentioned in the town meeting records of 1773. It was in the midst of the earliest clearings on the river and was undoubtedly built of logs. Still earlier evidence of interest in education is shown by the fact that in 1765 the proprietors of the town had offered two thousand acres of land to the founder of Dartmouth College if he would establish it in Thetford.²³

The Vermont constitutional plan was as follows:

. . . . a school or schools shall be established in each town by the Legislature, for the convenient instruction of youth, with such salaries to the masters, paid by each town, thereby to enable them to instruct youth at low prices. One grammar school in each county, and one university in this state ought to be established by direction of the General Assembly.²⁴

By this enactment Vermont was among the earliest states to make constitutional provision for education, two others having taken such action a year earlier.²⁵

Of the three grades named in this earliest plan, only the first one was mandatory, but the desirability of the two higher grades was placed before the people. Five years later, in 1782, when Vermont as an independent state began to grant new townships from her unoccupied territory, she reserved three shares (instead of one)

in each town for the benefit of education; namely, for an English school, for the "county grammar schools throughout this state", and for "a college within this state."²⁶ Thus was education again emphasized and three grades recognized.

In 1786 a revision of the constitution placed the responsibility for elementary schools more definitely on each individual town.²⁷ Under this revision the schools of any town would be likely to reveal the character and ambition of its residents. The plan for a university was omitted in the revision, but it persisted in the minds of the people, and in 1791 a charter was issued for the University of Vermont, Asa Burton of Thetford being one of the original trustees.²⁸ The subjects to be taught in the district schools were not prescribed until 1797, and they were then only those in common practice, "English reading, writing and arithmetic."²⁹

In Vermont the county did not develop the degree of importance which it had in some of the other states, and the county grammar school did not become permanent. The early purpose of a grammar school had been to prepare young men for college, chiefly by means of the rudiments and grammar of the Latin and Greek languages, and it had been the practice in Connecticut, whence most of the early Vermont families had come, to grant land for such schools. But by the time that Vermont was ready to establish county grammar schools private individuals had begun to associate in order to found schools, of grammar or secondary grade, in their home towns. Thus it came to pass that the earliest one to be founded in the state was not a county school but a private one, established in 1780 at Bennington under the name of Clio Hall.³⁰ The aim of this school was "to advance literature and promote refinement in this northern world."

Between that date and the opening of Thetford Academy in 1819, a period of nearly forty years, twenty-eight such schools were founded in the state, of which fourteen had the title of Grammar School, twelve of Academy, and two had other names, their curriculums

following substantially the same lines.³¹ Apparently there was little difference in the public mind between a grammar school and an academy. A distinguishing feature at first was that a county grammar school had the rental of certain county lands. But as will appear, Thetford Academy, and similar schools, later were given the use of a portion of the sequestered lands in their own counties.

The first school in the state to have the title of County Grammar School was established in 1780 at Norwich, Thetford's next neighbor on the south, which is in Windsor County.³² The building was about ten miles from the site of the future academy in Thetford. The school did not flourish and little is known about it.

Thetford is in Orange County and unknown persons caused an article to be inserted in the warning for a town meeting in 1801 "to see if the town will raise money to build a house for the Orange County Grammar School if we can get a grant of it." This was passed over, but it shows that the idea of an advanced school was stirring in the minds of some of the voters of the town, at this early date.³³

Authorized by the state law of 1782, Thetford had gradually established common school districts and appointed a "trustee" for each one.³⁴ The men of the Hill district had organized in 1792 with Beriah Loomis as the "school trust". A log schoolhouse was built, evidently by Loomis, and with his usual contrariness he made much trouble by refusing to keep the conditions of a bond which he had given regarding the date of its completion. They voted to raise money for the support of a school by a tax on the "poles and rateable estates of the district", and fuel was to be contributed according to the number of children from each family. There are indications that the school did not open until 1798.

Length of terms varied, being "three months and no more" at first, but in 1819 they were voting to "hold a school four months in summer and six months in winter." In contrast to the custom of "boarding around" they voted at this time to pay the board of a teacher at the

rate of \$1 a week in summer and \$1.17 in winter. Attendance was not compulsory and the custom was for girls and small children to be taught by a woman in summer, and older boys by a male teacher in the winter. The school house was originally near the meeting house, but by 1819 its successor was on the outskirts of the village, where the latest successor stands in 1950.

Asa Burton was a member of the school committee for this Hill district in 1817, Buckingham and Orange Heaton had served at various times, and Hopkins was clerk for at least ten years. The only known teacher in the early years was William Heaton, who taught for three months in 1798 for \$14 a month. The Heaton family was an intelligent one and William had probably attended district schools in Swanzey, New Hampshire (where he lived until he was ten years old), and perhaps also the early school on the river in Thetford. He was about thirty years old in 1798. Only the three R's were taught at the time, and a school of older boys called for quick wits and a husky physique. One would expect that with its background of educated families, the district school on the Hill would be better than the average.

In the early days of the century the question of the education of women was being widely discussed. It was an old question, reaching back even to the Greek philosophers. Would they be as efficient as wives and mothers? Was it not the law of God that women were given the care of the home and should stay in it and not infringe upon "the domain of man"? One of the favourite sentiments was that the benefits of an education would be lost when a woman married.

1800 seems to have been the date of the earliest effort in Vermont to answer the question by demonstration.³⁵ In that year Miss Ida Strong opened a "Female Seminary" in Middlebury, which was historic in its own right, and also because of its later history. Miss Strong is considered to have been the "Pioneer of female education in the state."

The school was soon taken over by Miss Emma Hart, who later became Mrs. Willard. She was able to follow the studies of a college student who lived in her family,

and when financial need led her to take charge of the school, she, with the encouragement of her husband, introduced advanced subjects and proved to her own satisfaction that women were capable of understanding them. She also extended her theories to housewifery, the special province of women, by suggesting that it might be reduced to a system. She was one of the foremost pioneers in the education of women and was later the founder of a permanent school in Troy, New York, which bears her name.

Dr. Burton and Judge Buckingham, as early trustees of Middlebury College, frequently visited Middlebury, and must have been familiar with Mrs. Willard's work. They, however, would not need to be convinced of the abilities of women. Judging from letters, autographs, and brief items of their activities, the wives on the Hill seem to have been capable of keeping pace with their husbands. Mrs. Hopkins and the second Mrs. Kendrick were sisters and had been reared in the most cultivated society of Hartford, Connecticut. Dr. Burton said of his beloved first wife,

she understood and was able to defend the doctrines of the Gospel. She exceeded in a dispute. If any embraced errors among the Clergy, she was not afraid to confute them. And in a dispute, I never knew her to be overcome.³⁶

With these qualifications he also lists,

. . . her economy, frugality, carefulness & attention to every object; her industry her powers of mind, her improvements in knowledge, her benevolence & piety, her example

Coeducation had been accepted in a modified form in some of the Vermont academies by 1817, but as late as 1816 boys and girls were reciting separately while attending an academy in Burlington.³⁷ This had been common practice, and girls were not expected to declaim, as were the boys. It is evident that it was generally assumed that girls should not attend school in winter. An article on the education of females in the *American Journal of Education* in 1827 said

. . . free exercise in the open air is indeed a good thing
. . . . But this inestimable privilege our climate un-

fortunately denies to the female sex during at least two thirds of the year.³⁸

In contrast to pioneer days, the "female sex" was considered delicate. The form of tuberculosis, known then as "consumption", was affecting many young people, and exposure to inclement weather was thought to be one cause.

With two college trustees among the capable men of the Hill, the intellectual and cultural level would be likely to be high for the time. An indication is that a Social Library of several hundred volumes had been gathered, possibly as early as 1800. Social Libraries were forerunners of the Public Library and were financed by subscription. The few volumes of the Thetford library that remain include sermons, histories, biographies, and travels, and the numbering indicates that there were at least between two and three hundred volumes. The inscriptions are in the hand-writing of Asa Burton, Oramel Hinckley, who died in 1811, and Thomas Hopkins, who died in 1828.

There was also an interest in music in the community. Dr. Burton wrote that he early "took much pains to have the art of music cultivated to soften their manners." A musical society had been organized in 1781 with members from Thetford, and from Lyme, across the river, in which Dr. Burton and Beriah Loomis were "masters" and of which Burton was clerk. The few tunes which are noted in the brief record are for hymns.³⁹ Forty-five years later Dr. Burton wrote that music in the church had "been performed well from that day to this, in general", and that the singers "became so well versed in the theoretical and practical parts of music as to exceed any Town around them."

Besides Dr. Burton, the pulpit was occupied from time to time by neighboring clergymen, and by the president and members of the Dartmouth faculty, who were usually clergymen. Thus there was a measure of variety in the sermons. They were usually an hour long and were philosophic dissertations, carefully planned to prove certain doctrines, proceeding step by step, and requiring

intense concentration to follow. It was the custom for the more scholarly listeners to spend much time in discussing them, and special ones were printed for distribution or sale. At least nineteen of Dr. Burton's were published.

The presence of Dartmouth College twelve miles away, the Alma Mater of two of the founders of the academy and the goal of local ambitious boys, would be likely to contribute inspiration to educational plans. The president, Francis Brown, was well known in Thetford, and had occupied the Thetford pulpit on occasion. He was also a fellow member of Asa Burton in the Dartmouth Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa. At least three Thetford young men were in college during President Brown's short term of five years, one being Dr. Burton's step-son. That Dartmouth would in some way be consulted is probable.

But the college was in the midst of an extraordinary and violent controversy which was stirring the whole region. A faction in the institution and certain individuals in the state were arbitrarily trying to change the conditions of the charter without the consent of the trustees, in order to make it a state university. If they should succeed, the character of the college would be changed and its freedom curtailed.

The case was carried through the courts until it became of national importance and reached the Supreme Court of the United States, where it was argued by Daniel Webster, an alumnus of the college. The decision of the court, preserving the college, was handed down by Chief Justice John Marshall, and had far-reaching results, insuring, as it did, the inviolability of contracts in the future. One of the results was encouragement of the founding of private schools and colleges by giving protection to endowments.⁴⁰

This disturbance, lasting about four years, had coincided with the period of planning for Thetford academy. Dr. Burton was much disturbed, and is known to have presided over a meeting of alumni and friends of the college who proposed to raise money to aid in financing the

trial. At a Consociation of Churches in 1817, he proposed that an hour of prayer be held for the college.

News of the court's decision reached Hanover on the day after the opening of the academy, and the celebration was called "excessive." Cannon were heard in the surrounding towns and the news probably reached Thetford in that manner. The president and his faculty doubtless had little time and strength to consider the founding of a small school in the neighborhood. But as will appear, the school was soon to benefit from a frequent interchange, Thetford students entering the college and college men coming to Thetford as principals; and representatives of the college faculty were to serve as Thetford trustees.

IV

In this second decade of the century the atmosphere surrounding Thetford seems to have been charged with a desire for advanced schools. Those which had already come into existence were approximately based on the pattern of the County Grammar Schools, but with the social and economic awakening following the war, there was a tendency to experiment with new types. An account of the contemporary establishment of two academies in the vicinity will illustrate the tendency and will be valuable for comparison.

In considering the first one, it is necessary to come back to Asa Burton and his conviction that education and religion should go hand in hand. For the benefit of those who are not familiar with the geography of the town, it should be said that Thetford lies on the eastern border of Vermont and is separated from New Hampshire by the Connecticut River. In Vermont the county is Orange, and the early name applied to the opposite region in New Hampshire was Coos.⁴¹ Each side had its Association of Congregational Churches, which were active in religious enterprises. After some preliminary discussions among themselves, these associations united in a meeting at Piermont, in New Hampshire, in 1811, and there resolved to establish an institution to be called the New

Hampshire and Vermont Theological Seminary. An historical sketch of the movement says:

. . . . a deep taint of French infidelity was becoming widespread and alarming. Good men were everywhere aroused to lift in opposition, a standard of righteousness and truth; to raise up and send forth, amid the teeming populations, an evangelical and educated ministry. The demand greatly exceeded the supply.⁴²

The West was opening, many new churches were being organized in the pioneer towns, while in the East benevolent societies were being founded to aid them, and to carry on other reforms. Dr. Burton called it the "Age of Benevolence." Vermont, following the trend, had already formed several such societies, including a state missionary society in 1807, a Bible Society in 1812, and a Tract Society for distributing religious literature in 1818. Branches were organized in the towns and the larger societies maintained a periodical.

Eventually the plan of the Orange-Coos Association changed. A theological seminary had recently been opened in Andover, Massachusetts, the earliest in the United States, and the clergymen soon realized that the need in the upper Connecticut valley was not another theological institution, but that a school which should prepare future clergymen for college was more necessary. Heretofore, preparation had been largely secured privately by residence and study with a clergyman.

Lack of unanimity caused the associations to call on outside help, and in October, 1812, an ecclesiastical council was held in Windsor, Vermont, in the valley, to which were invited delegates from the Massachusetts and Connecticut Associations. There were also delegates from the faculty of the new Andover Seminary, and from Dartmouth College, and President Timothy Dwight of Yale delivered the sermon. It was a distinguished company and testifies to the importance attached to the project. No full record of the meeting has been found, but it is known that Dr. Dwight argued for an educated ministry, and it is likely that a thorough discussion of such an education took place. Asa Burton of Thetford was present and probably was a local delegate.

A notice in *The Panoplist* had said earlier that there are many pious young men of respectable talents but in indigent circumstances, who have manifested a wish to obtain an education with a view to becoming preachers of the gospel It has appeared extremely desirable that some charitable institution may be furnished with the means of giving preparatory education and an institution is now formed on the eastern border of Vermont, Most of the trustees are extensively known in New England.⁴³

This hints that the first plan was to place the school on the Vermont side. But several sites were discussed and it was finally decided to establish it at Meriden, New Hampshire, because Daniel Kimball of that village had offered a substantial sum of money. Union had already been suggested as a name, and now the benefactor's name was added, making it Kimball Union Academy.

The instructors were to keep constantly in view the principal object of the institution, which was "to promote the interests of religion and morality." Each trustee and instructor

. . . . before he enters on the duties of his office, shall subscribe to a writing testifying his belief in the Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, as containing a summary of the doctrines of the Gospel.

Among the first trustees chosen was Asa Burton, who was elected president of the board by ballot. An agent was employed to gather contributions in New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York, and Dartmouth engaged to continue aid to a certain number of men who entered the college from the academy. The school opened in 1815, with seven young men who had the ministry in view.

It is significant that, from the first, the Thetford church and its affiliated societies contributed to the support of the Meriden school. The distance from Thetford Hill is about twenty-five miles, and the contributions were delivered annually by messenger, sometimes by Dr. Burton, Judge Buckingham, or Simeon Short. Mrs. Burton, who died in 1818, left a bequest of fifty dollars to the school.

Six months after the opening of Thetford Academy, Dr. Burton resigned the presidency of the Meriden trustees,

having been president of the two boards at the same time. He, however, remained a member of the Meriden board for two more years. It is evident that the connection between Thetford and Kimball Union was close, and it is likely that Dr. Burton had hoped to have the school located in Thetford. Records show that at least two of the meetings for consideration of the founding were held there. But in 1815 Thetford was in no condition to compete with Meriden and Daniel Kimball.

Concurrently with the development of plans for the Meriden and Thetford schools, an ambitious project was unfolding in Norwich, adjoining Thetford, which emerged as The American Literary, Scientific, and Military Academy for young men.⁴⁴ The founder, Alden Partridge, was probably well known in Thetford, as he was born and reared in Norwich, where Asa Burton was also reared, and where many Burton relatives were then living. The two towns had much in common and intercourse between them was constant, Norwich, however, having men of considerable wealth, who financed the school.

Partridge had transferred from Dartmouth to the newly organized West Point Military Academy, having received his appointment from President Jefferson, and after graduation, had taught there and had been superintendent for a time. His plans for a school must have been fully discussed in the Norwich locality, for he is known to have been considering them for ten years. He was an educational reformer, far ahead of his time. His conception of education was radical, emphasizing the twentieth century idea of preparation for living. Although the school was known as a military academy, it offered the classics, science, and literature, and advertised to prepare for all colleges; and he maintained that "the greatest possible number should be educated, as the republic depends on the general intelligence of the people."

In a lecture at Norwich in 1820 he expressed liberal and advanced convictions as follows:

In a country like ours, which is emphatically agricultural, I presume it will not be doubted that a practical, scientific

knowledge of agriculture would constitute an important appendage to the education of every American citizen. Indeed the most certain mode of improving the agriculture of the country will be to make it a branch of elementary knowledge

To the institution should be attached a range of mechanic shops, where those who possess an aptitude and inclination might occasionally employ a leisure hour in learning the use of tools.

Physical training was constant, and he organized a band during the first year. He also had a library of eleven hundred volumes and a reading room with United States and European periodicals. An Association for the Promotion of Useful Education connected with the school declared

that the object of education is to prepare youth to discharge in the best possible manner, the various duties likely to devolve upon them in after life.

The first prospectus announced that

Particular attention will be given to the cultivation of all those liberal, manly, noble and independent sentiments which ought to characterize every American.

Partridge's plan did not emphasize religious training as did that of Kimball Union, and it is evident that he did not see eye to eye with the Meriden founders, for he declared that "Everything of a sectarian character in religion is utterly excluded." But in general he conformed to the customs of the day. The cadets were expected to attend chapel exercises each morning, and church services on the Sabbath, and were to remain quietly in their rooms following the latter. Reading and study of the Scriptures was also "earnestly and urgently enjoined", but apparently was not compulsory.

The first building was an impressive one of brick, with four stories and forty-two rooms. The school opened in September 1820, and residence of forty-eight weeks was prescribed at a cost of \$250. The early lists of students show that the school was not a rival of Thetford Academy. The expense would be prohibitive, the emphasis on military training would appeal only to those who sought an army career, and Dr. Burton, at least, would hardly have approved the liberal attitude toward religion.

As a matter of fact, most of the students came from other states and from prosperous families.

The Thetford men must have been fully informed of the objectives of these two schools. The Meriden school was founded by a religious group for the purpose of preparing young men to be religious leaders, and was a forerunner of the later denominational schools. Norwich was the project of one man whose object was, among others, to provide competent military leaders, and he administered the school himself, having no trustees to consult, or please. Thetford occupied a middle ground, being founded by a local group of men of widely different ages (see Appendix II), of diverse occupations, and of at least two religious denominations.

Of the three, Kimball Union slowly modified its objectives and later became co-educational, with a comfortable endowment. Norwich, feeling the pressure of co-education, founded a seminary for girls, and admitted them to some of the Academy classes. Later the Academy led a precarious existence for some years. (See note⁴⁴.) With a tavern keeper, the postmaster, merchants, town officials, doctors, a benevolent farmer, and only one clergyman on the roll of the Thetford trustees, it is not surprising that girls were admitted to the Thetford school from the beginning. Whatever the earliest plan may have been, it is plain that at its opening, the school was designed for the community.

V

The extent of Asa Burton's influence in the Thetford project can only be surmised. He was the leading figure in the community, and his hold on the church was still strong in spite of the revolts of Loomis and Orange Heaton. This is shown by the fact that following the Loomis trial, thirty-one new members were added to the church, including Episcopalian Judge Buckingham. And in 1822, three years after the opening of the school, a great revival brought one hundred and forty-two members during the year, including Simeon Short, Captain Latham, Dr. Kendrick, and Timothy Bartholomew. However, seating charts of the meeting house indicate that these men and

their families had been accustomed to attending services. In fact, social standing demanded it, and it is probable that like Judge Buckingham, some of them had been members of other churches.

Since Dr. Burton was the first president of the Thetford board of trustees, his position in that body must have been secure; and a biographical account of the first principal states that he came to Thetford mainly through Burton's influence⁴⁵. As to the matter of admitting girls, he surely believed in the education of women, for he had written of his daughter Mercy that he meant to give her "a better education than was common." She was sixteen in 1818 and apparently entered the school at its opening.

Late in 1818 he wrote, "The last year has been a season of great trials and afflictions to me." His wife had died after a distressing illness of two years' duration, and at the age of sixty-six, he was mourning her loss. He had passed through other trials also, and was despondent because he felt that the community did not appreciate his work. In words which were meant only for his daughter, he gave his estimate of the town as it was at the moment, and which may be safely taken as a true one.

The aspect of society is greatly altered. The inhabitants of the town have increased greatly and settled in every part. They have been improving gradually in knowledge, in property, in morals, & religion, until they have become as respectable, as distinguished, influential, & in all respects as regular in their habits, as perhaps any town nigh here. This great change has taken place within the period of 42 years. It has been effected by the grace and agency of God.

With all the influences which were compelling attention to the educational needs of the young people of Thetford, perhaps no single one would have a more direct effect than his sermon, delivered in February 1818, which has been preserved in manuscript. Its date is just a year before the opening of the academy, and it is addressed to the children in the orderly and progressive form which all effective preachers employed.

There are three points: knowledge in the head; grace in the heart; the best period in life to gain these. The

aim is to show the children how to have “good characters” and how to be useful and happy here and forever. He extols knowledge. One who has it

is acquainted with laws which govern the natural world, with the sun, moon and stars, he is acquainted with the magnitudes, distances, revolutions, he knows of what the air, water, earth, heat, and light are composed persons who know but little, their minds are little, groveling, limited, and know nothing more worthy of their attention than vain amusements.

Of grace in the heart, he says,

Without a new heart no one can be happy after death However much persons may know, without grace they will go to hell.

The significant words regarding education are on the last page, in the section called in that day the “improvement.” Here the parents are addressed.

Parents, if ye wish to assist yr children in ye improvements of yr minds ye ought to

1—Provide em with good teachers.

2—Provide for em, if able, a school to teach higher branches.

3—Provide em with a well chosen, good library, not novels, but books on the several branches of literature.

4—Give em time to study.

Consider that the mind is capable of an endless growth.

Consider what it means to neglect its growth.⁴⁶

CHAPTER I—REFERENCES

- ¹An account of these changes may be found in any history of Vermont, but research has modified the interpretations of the early historians.
- ²Slade, William, Jun., *Vermont State Papers*, 1823, p. 247. Constitution of the State of Vermont, Chap. 11, Sec. VI.
- ³Ibid., p. 244, Chap. 1, Sec. 1.
- ⁴Shown by an early crude map, undated, unsigned. Vermont Historical Society Collections.
- ⁵Few villages are incorporated in New England. The term is popularly applied to any group of houses having a meeting house, a store, and a post office.
- ⁶Burton, Asa, papers, typed copy, 318 pp. consisting of autobiographical letters to his daughter, a history of the church and society in Thetford, creed of the church, and a history of the Republican Party in Thetford; written in the second and third decades of the nineteenth century. These papers have been freely used and quoted without reference to pages. Material concerning him also appears in religious periodicals of his time.
- ⁷Early name of the state legislature, which was limited to one house until 1836.
- ⁸Fay, J. Wharton, *American Psychology Before William James*, pp. 75-89. See also Foster, Frank Hugh, *A History of the New England Theology*, p. 242, et. seq.
- ⁹Records of the Church of Christ in Thetford, 1773-1832. Typed copy, 276 pp., p. 1.
- ¹⁰Ibid., p. 4.
- ¹¹The Jefferson party was called Democratic-Republican at first. It is important to recall that it was the forerunner of the later Democratic party.
- ¹²Wells, Frederic P., *History of Newbury, Vermont*, p. 143.
- ¹³The biographical material used in this chapter, and somewhat in others, is from the author's collection of data concerning the families of Thetford, and is derived from many sources, family, church, town and state records, deeds, obituaries, letters, published gazetteers, town histories, genealogies, and others. An occasional reference will be given.
- ¹⁴Shera, Jesse H., *Foundations of the Public Library*, pp. 38, 251.
- ¹⁵Burton, Asa, D.D., *Funeral Discourse occasioned by the death of Colonel Oramel Hinckley*.
- ¹⁶Dictionary of American Biography, *Prince Saunders*, article by Mary B. Slade.
- ¹⁷Eaton, Gen. John, ed., *Thetford Academy; Seventy-fifth Anniversary and Reunion*, 1894, 203 pp., including a Historical Discourse

by the Rev. Carlos Slafter, pp. 19-49. Items from the Discourse will be referred to Slafter without page references. Other items from the volume will be referred to Eaton, with page references.

¹⁸Comstock, John M., ed., *Deming's Vermont Officers and Gazetteer*, p. 229.

¹⁹Bartholomew, George Wells, *Record of the Bartholomew Family*, p. 209. The characterization was probably written by Dr. Willard Hosford, a nephew of Timothy P. Bartholomew.

²⁰Ms in author's collections.

²¹Batchellor, Albert Stillman, ed., *New Hampshire State Papers*, Vol. XXVI, p. 489.

²²Huden, John C., *Development of State School Administration in Vermont*, p. 16.

²³Chase, Frederick, (John K. Lord, ed.,) *A History of Dartmouth College*, 2nd edition, p. 91.

²⁴Walton, E. P., ed., *Governor and Council*, Vol. 1, p. 86.

²⁵Pennsylvania and North Carolina in 1776.

²⁶State Papers of Vermont, Vol. 2, *Charter granted by the State of Vermont*.

²⁷Huden, op. cit., p. 20.

²⁸Stone, Mason S., *History of Education, State of Vermont*, p. 259.

²⁹An Act for the Support of Schools, 1797, Sec. I.

³⁰Andrews, Edward D., *The County Grammar Schools and Academies of Vermont*, a Doctor's dissertation, Yale University Graduate School, 1930, Ms., 519 pp. Proceedings of the Vermont Historical Society, Vol. 4, No. 3, 1936 carries pp. 117-209 of the above. The founding of this school is discussed on pages 137-143. Clio was the muse of history in classical mythology.

³¹Ibid., 207.

³²Ibid., 127.

³³Five years later the County School was secured by Randolph, and later became the first State Normal School. Andrews, op. cit., pp. 165, 166.

³⁴The following three paragraphs are based upon the records of District No. 10.

³⁵Andrews, op. cit., pp. 155, 156.

³⁶Dispute is used here in the sense of disputation, debate, or discussion. The points in theology were minutely discussed by clergymen. Dr. Burton's "divinity" students often lived in his home and Mrs. Burton followed his lectures and the discussions.

³⁷Andrews, op. cit., p. 154.

³⁸Vol. 2, p. 124.

³⁹Constitution of the society in author's collections.

⁴⁰The literature concerning this case is voluminous. The writer has depended upon the various histories of the college. The latest one by Leon B. Richardson gives sixty pages to the subject.

⁴¹Pronounced with two syllables, Co-os.

⁴²Richards, Cyrus S., *Historical Sketch of Kimball Union Academy*, 1880, p. 7.

⁴³Vol. V., Jan. 1813. Vols. III & IV also carried discussions of the founding. *The Panoplist* was a periodical founded in 1805 "as an active defender of ancient faith" and was a forerunner of the later Congregational Missionary Herald. *The Adviser*, a Vermont religious periodical, of which Asa Burton was a co-editor, and other contemporary periodicals discussed the founding of this school. The writer also consulted the original records of the secretary and treasurer.

⁴⁴Compiled from original items in the Vermont Historical Society Library at Montpelier; *History of Norwich University*, 3 vols., by William Arba Ellis; *History of Norwich, Vermont*, by M. E. Goddard and Henry V. Partridge; the valuable *Record of the Celebration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of Its Founding*; and Andrews, op. cit., pp. 196-199. The long name of the school was changed by its charter of 1834 to Norwich University, and after an unstable existence the school was removed to Northfield, Vermont, in 1866, there to become a successful military college.

⁴⁵Wild, Rev. Azel W., *History of Vermont Churches*, Ms.

⁴⁶Archives of Dartmouth College.



Chapter II

1819 - 1825

I

THE TIME WAS evidently ripe for establishing a school on the Hill. The character and cultivation of the families, the growing conviction that girls should have more educational advantages, and the inadequateness of the district schools, made it logical and imperative that some provision should be made for study beyond the three R's which would be available to all who could pay the tuition. High schools had not appeared¹, an academy, or seminary, was the only answer,² and some one must take the initiative.

According to the Rev. Carlos Slafter,³ Simeon Short was the one to do so. In 1818 he was about thirty-one years of age, one of the youngest of the group. More than half a century later, in 1875, when he was in his eighty-ninth year, he told Mr. Slafter the tale of the founding, as he recalled it. Nearly twenty years later, in 1894, Slafter delivered an Historical Discourse for the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the founding.

This discourse is written in an entertaining and enthusiastic vein, covering seventy-five years of the life of the school, but because of the loss of the secretarial records by fire in 1843, Slafter was dependent upon Judge Short's memory of the first twenty-five years. Slafter was reared in Thetford and the paper includes also his own experiences, besides material which has not been found elsewhere. Therefore, it is necessarily the basis for the first seventy-five years of the present study, subject to modifications in the light of later evidence.

As Mr. Slafter presented the founding, Simeon Short, after having delivered a contribution to Kimball Union Academy, came to the conclusion while on his way home,

that Thetford should have a school of her own instead of contributing to one outside the town and state.

The more he considered the needs of Thetford and the neighboring towns, the spirit of the inhabitants, and the advantages of such a school, the more earnest and hopeful he became.

Paraphrasing Slafter, "he took his tea that evening with Judge Buckingham", who was enthusiastic, and they at once called upon Judge Loomis and Col. Fitch, who approved of the plan. Dr. Burton, Judge Reed, and "the firm of Latham & Kendrick" were seen the next day, a meeting of the leading citizens was held that evening in Judge Buckingham's office, and a subscription was begun at once.

There is evidence, however, that all was not as expeditious as this sounds. Mr. Slafter places these meetings in August, 1818, because the records show that a donation to Kimball Union was delivered in that month by Short. And knowing that Thetford Academy opened on the 8th of February, 1819, he concludes that the donation record "shows when and by whom the first conception of an academy in Thetford was formed", and that "six months after Simeon Short dreamed of an academy, [they] took possession of the completed building."

But an account of labor on the building, kept by Lyman Fitch (See cut), has come to light, which proves that meetings must have been held much earlier than August 1818. The account shows that preparation of lumber began in March, 1818, five months before August; and the preparation of lumber must have been preceded by a period of discussion and planning. This change makes it necessary, also, to discard the assertion that the building was occupied six months after "the first conception of an academy in Thetford." Ignoring a period of discussion, the account shows that preparation of lumber and erection of the building alone occupied eight months.

These discrepancies, however, do not make it necessary to doubt the story of the tea party and Simeon Short's enthusiasm. By his own statement thirty years later, he "was among the first who suggested the expediency and

importance of founding a school”⁴ and he well may have been the one to take the initiative in suggesting organization to his neighbors. He was young, vigorous, and ambitious, and knew the value of education.

Lacking records, there is also uncertainty of the identity and number of the original trustees. The earliest known documentary evidence is in a deed of the site of the building, dated June 20, 1818, which is eight months before the opening of the school, and two months earlier than the reputed tea party, giving further evidence that organization had taken place before August. This deed names as a “Committee of Trust”, Joseph Reed, William Heaton, and Thomas Kendrick. The deed is witnessed by Thomas Hopkins and certified by Beriah Loomis, Justice of the Peace.

The next documentary evidence of the identity of the trustees is shown in the charter, dated October 29, 1819, which was eight months *after* the opening. Here are named nine men, “The Rev. Doct. Burton”, Buckingham, Reed, Heaton, Fitch, Kendrick, Short, Hammond, and Bartholomew, “who may add to their number until the whole of the members of the corporation shall not exceed fifteen.” (See Appendix 1.)

The relatively uniform distribution from Thetford Hill of Heaton, Hammond, and Bartholomew, suggests that the Hill group may have decided to create a board which should be more representative of the town, rather than wholly of the Hill. Slafter does not allude to them as being from outside the village, but he “confidently” adds to the list on the charter, Hopkins, Latham, Loomis, and White, again depending upon Short’s memory.

Hopkins appears in the treasurer’s book in 1825 as the second treasurer, but there is no indication of the date of his election as a trustee. His eligibility lay in the fact that he had been postmaster and town clerk for the preceding ten years, and that his social standing was ample. Latham does not appear in the first two catalogues, for 1827 and 1828, but does appear in the third one of 1835. He, therefore, could not have been elected until 1828 or later. Loomis died a month before the charter was

issued. The supposition would be that he was a member of the earliest organization and that he was a trustee when the school opened in February, but it has not been proved. The fact that he certified the deed of June, 1818, shows at least that he was active at that time.

James White does not appear anywhere except on the Slafter list. As he lived for more than two decades after the school opened, it is likely that had he been elected, he would have been named in the earliest catalogue of 1827, as the trustees were evidently expected to serve until old age, or removal from the town. Judge Short's memory may have confused him with Charles White, who was elected about five years later.

James may not have measured up to the social or professional level which seems to have been desired, for there is an evident plan to include a considerable proportion of professional men, which may have been one reason for leaving unfilled places in the charter. The 1827 catalogue shows three new clergymen, two new lawyers, and a new doctor.

Frederick Smith of Strafford, adjoining Thetford, signed a petition as a trustee in 1820, and must therefore have been among the earliest to be added to the nine. With his election the organization ceased to be wholly a town affair; but he was closely related to Thetford families, and the two towns were twins, having been chartered on the same day to grantees from the same town. In a list compiled by Eaton, one other name is given, "Hon. Jedediah H. Harris" of Strafford. His ability and experience made him eligible, but research has failed to confirm Eaton's statement.

The following table presents briefly the result of the foregoing arguments, giving a tentative list of trustees late in 1819, or early in 1820.

Named in the charter of October 1819: Burton, Buckingham, Reed, Heaton, Fitch, Kendrick, Short, Hammond, Bartholomew.

Probably on the original list, but died before the charter was issued: Beriah Loomis.

Probably elected toward the quota of fifteen: Hopkins, Smith.

Named by Slafter or Eaton, but probably not on any list in 1819 or 1820: White, Latham, and Harris.

Knowing the men, one would expect that self-perpetuation would be the most feasible method of acquiring new members of the board. The township had not arrived at a progressive attitude in regard to schools, the district was little better, and men like Short, Buckingham, and Burton would hardly dream of allowing plans for a school to be lodged with any but their own kind.

Asa Burton testified in his letters to his daughter that "upon the founding of the Academy" he was chosen president. His selection would be a foregone conclusion, as he had been notable in town and state as a presiding officer, and his name appears as president of many organizations. Deference was usually shown to a clergyman, and a review of his life, published seven years after his death, states that the school was founded "with his advice and counsel."⁵

It is known that Judge Buckingham was the first treasurer, as his records exist. Simeon Short was secretary in 1822, and he would naturally be honored in the original organization, and probably was. No committee is named in a catalogue until 1843, but there is the "committee of trust", Reed, Heaton, and Kendrick, in the deed of June, 1818; and a statement in the treasurer's book in 1827 refers to a "prudential committee."

The site of the building was doubtless an important, and possibly a controversial subject for discussion, but its selection is not mentioned by Slafter. The Hill street, with its common, and the only meeting house and post office in the town, would be the natural location, and there was plenty of land. Orange Heaton owned the most desirable lot, which was near the homes of a majority of the founders. Whether he offered it, or they persuaded him to donate it, is not apparent, but it is gratifying to find that he did give it. His deed of June 20, 1818, reads

for and in consideration of the advantages & Benefits derived by Education to myself & heirs & to Society

for the use and Benefit of an Academy to be Erected in sd
Thetford For the above purposes & no other for-
ever.

There being no corporation at the time, the grantees were the Committee of Trust mentioned earlier. The lot was opposite the one upon which Orange Heaton was about to build his new home, and it would doubtless be a matter of satisfaction to him to have the new school house constantly within view. A second deed, nearly a duplicate, was executed "to the trustees", after the charter was received, thus insuring legal possession.

As will be shown later, the building was raised in May 1818, and the first deed of June, 1818, thus reveals that the raising took place three weeks before the deed was signed. Instances are known in the region of a prospective grantor signing an agreement to execute a deed. If this was not done in the present instance, the building was raised before the trustees could claim possession of the land on which it stood; and the raising was, of course, preceded by occupation of the land for lumber, supplies, and labor.

An unusual condition of the deed was that it conveyed only the land on which the building actually stood, forty by sixty feet in area, which was the size of the building. This left no room for the work of construction or repairs. It is well known in Thetford that early buildings were occasionally set upon one line of a lot, with amusing or trying consequences to later generations. It was an extreme expression of the shrewd bargain-driving of the time, but in this case three sides were cut off, and the fourth side bordered on the highway.

Dealing with Orange Heaton may have had its difficulties. His situation in relation to the church was an unhappy one, and it may have colored his feelings toward some of the trustees. He had publicly flouted Asa Burton's convictions about church government, and Asa was not the man to hide his disapproval of such action. Excommunication was a serious matter, affecting a person's social standing. As will be recalled, Orange had reason, also, to harbor resentment toward Judge Buckingham.

One of the decisions which the trustees had to make was whether the building should be of brick or wood. Some of the best brick-clay in the state lay only a mile away and the first brick houses in the town were appearing. Orange Heaton's new house was to be a brick one. But it was probably more practical for the trustees to utilize wood, as contributions of lumber and labor could more easily be made by individuals. Lyman Fitch may have indicated that his contributions would be considerable, for Slafter says that the timber was all given, and that Col. Fitch claimed "the principal share of that generosity." There was still much untouched virgin timber land, and Fitch, like others, owned wood lots in different parts of the town. His account is not receipted but shows the amount of labor and lumber for which he was responsible, and he probably donated all of it.

With the aid of his younger brother, Bela, and Daniel Titcomb, evidently a boy, he began on the 31st of March, 1818, "falling timber", until he had 989 feet of "long timber" which, after hewing, he valued at \$4.75. Hewing called for skill with the broadaxe. Three and two-thirds days with oxen were occupied in "transporting timber", undoubtedly to the Hill, and on the 6th of April, Col. Fitch and Daniel were "placing timber to frame." This included the careful task of measuring and numbering each piece, of mortices dug and tenons fitted, and of holes bored to receive the wooden pins. The latter had perhaps been shaped beside some evening fires.

In the meantime the foundation had been laid and the sills were placed upon it, ready for the sides and ends which had been pinned together in sections. When all was ready, specially selected skillful men under the direction of a foreman would raise a side or an end by means of a rope and spiked poles, while a man with an iron bar stood by each post to see that it slipped into its mortice. A raising called for judgment and experience and was a spectacle which was breathlessly watched. No clue appears as to the leader or foreman, but he may have been Lyman Fitch.

Workmen who repaired the building in later years reported that the hemlock sills were 10" by 10" and were

40' and 60' long, with no splicing. The pine boards for siding were from 12" to 24" wide. There was no cellar. For the foundation, a trench was dug and filled with small stones, and large ones placed upon them without mortar.⁶

In his account Col. Fitch indicated the date of the raising, May 28, 1818. A raising was a festival to which the whole town turned out, and often surrounding towns were represented. After the task was accomplished, there was merry-making, and food and drink were served, including rum, which was always expected.⁷

No items for June, July and August are given in the Fitch account. All men were farmers, and the growing season in Thetford is short. Others may have labored, however, and on September 7th, he began again, now "finishing", and continued until November 21st. The only detail of the last process is "almost a book of Goal Leaf", which doubtless was applied to the ball on the cupola.

There were eighty-three days of his own labor, eighteen of his helpers, and the use of his oxen for six and one-half days, the total value being \$104. His own labor was computed at \$1.50 a day; for Bela and Daniel respectively, 50 and 67 cents; and for the oxen 67 cents. Slafter says that "there was no small emulation in carrying forward the enterprise", and the Bond family has a tradition that their ancestor, Amasa, a farmer living about a mile south of the village, brought the first piece of timber to the site early in the morning of the appointed day, which suggests a "bee".

In 1820 the trustees petitioned the legislature for a share in the apportionment of county grammar school land, and the petition gives a brief glimpse of those first days.

Your petitioners . . . have at the expense of nearly two thousand dollars erected and completely finished a large, commodious and elegant Building for the use of a School situate near the center of said Town of Thetford and furnished the same with an expensive Bell and have by their individual exertions, instituted therein and maintained for nearly two years, a School under an able instructor and assistant.

Two thousand dollars was probably their generous estimate of the value of the building. It is likely that little money was actually involved. There is no known representation of the building before the 1840s, but it is safe to conclude that the earliest one shows it as it was in 1818 (See frontispiece). The smaller building at the left, of course, was not existing at that time.

The claim of the petitioners that the building was "large, commodious and elegant" may occasion a smile in the twentieth century, but it was highly valued by them. It was their own creation and their own possession, and affection for the "old academy" was often expressed by students and alumni down to its last days in 1942, when at the age of one hundred and twenty-three years, it was destroyed by fire.

The cupola was certainly the most elegant object in the village in 1818, the meeting house then having no steeple. The lunette in the front gable was a touch which was appearing on the houses that were built at about this time, and the pole, topped by a ball, was wholly unique, especially if the ball were gilded, which seems likely. The bell was an asset, and evidently highly valued; and someone, unknown at present, testified to Mr. Slafter that it "rang out cheerily to convoke the school [for its first session] on that bright frosty morning of February in 1819." The church contributed \$50 toward its cost, and Slafter says that it was used for thirty-five years to call the people "to meeting." Not a hint has been found of the origin or the total cost of the bell. It was doubtless largely donated by an individual, perhaps Judge Buckingham or Dr. Kendrick.

II

But there could be no school until there was a principal, or preceptor, as he was then called. Much depended upon the first one and here again we discern the hand of Asa Burton. As the pastor of the community and president of the trustees, and also in conformity to the custom of the time, he would be likely to see to it that there should be a strong religious atmosphere as well as a

scholarly one. Dr. Burton knew the right man for the place, who came, it is said, "mainly through his influence."

The Rev. John Fitch had been the first pastor of the church in Danville, Vermont, being ordained there out-of-doors before there was a meeting house. He had been active in the General Convention of Congregational Ministers in the state, had preached once before the General Assembly, an honor distributed to the more able clergymen, and had been a trustee of Middlebury College. He had also been a co-editor, with Asa Burton, of *The Adviser*, the organ of the General Convention; a delegate to the Piermont convention which had inaugurated plans for Kimball Union Academy; and a member of the committee to write the constitution for that school. His association with Dr. Burton had thus been close and continuous.

He was graduated from Brown University in 1790, and had studied theology with the Rev. Nathaniel Emmons of Franklin, Massachusetts, an eminent preacher and theologian, and notable for the number of students he had trained for the ministry. After twenty-three years of service at Danville, he had resigned and had taken "a journey to the west." A journey was then the accepted treatment for a "decline", which may indicate that he was not in good health. In 1819 he was about forty-nine years of age. He had already prepared young men for college, as clergymen often did, and his varied experience would enable him to be equal to the task of launching an academy.

He had married, in Danville, Miss Sally Magoon, described in the marriage notice as "amiable and accomplished", from which it may be inferred that she was a helpmeet in the early days of the school. Unfortunately her life in Thetford was short. She died on March 21, 1821, aged 46, and her grave is in the East Thetford cemetery. They had one child, a daughter, who did not come to the village.

Of special interest to Thetford was the second marriage of Mr. Fitch, by Asa Burton in 1823, to Lydia Loomis

Palmer. Lydia was a daughter of Beriah Loomis, and the widow of John Hampden Palmer, who had died during the last war, leaving her to care for four young daughters. In 1824 another daughter, Nancy Jane Magoon Fitch, was born, a granddaughter of Beriah Loomis, and she was duly baptized by Asa Burton.⁸

One of the early acts of John Fitch, after settling down in Thetford, was to purchase of Orange Heaton three and one-half acres of land abutting the academy building on the south and east sides, and running back from the road eighteen rods. Upon this he built a small house south of the academy building, on the lot containing, in 1950, the Grange Hall, but nearer the road. Later, in 1820, on the same date of Orange Heaton's second deed, Mr. Fitch conveyed to the trustees, for \$1, strips of land ten feet in width adjoining the south and east sides of the academy building, which was a friendly act. The north side had no legal space for repair work for an undetermined number of years.

No catalogue of the school is known to have been issued during John Fitch's incumbency, and again lacking secretarial records, it is necessary to weave together the small items which have been gathered from various sources, chiefly from Judge Buckingham's treasury records and the church records. Both were kept with care, but Judge Buckingham's are sometimes difficult to interpret.

From the latter it appears that the salary of John Fitch was, by contract, \$300 a year, he to be "found with house & wood", the house rent to be reckoned as \$30 a year. This was more than Dr. Burton's salary, which had never exceeded £85, or \$283.33, a fact which he resented as the prosperity of the town increased. Families were still largely self-sustaining. Mr. Fitch had land enough for a garden and the tax records reveal that he kept a cow. He may also have had presents of produce, as most clergymen did, although Asa Burton complained that he personally had few. Mr. Fitch apparently did not keep a horse, but horses were sometimes rented, and often loaned. He was a member of the militia, which all towns maintained, and was thus exempt from a portion of

his taxes. He was thrifty, as he had \$300 "on hand and at interest."

Concerning the school, the *Vermont Journal* of May 7, 1822, carried an announcement that

The summer quarter will begin June 3rd under the care of Rev. John Fitch. A female assistant will be employed during the summer and fall quarters, who will instruct Young Ladies in the various branches of Drawing, Painting, French Language, History, and useful and polite literature.

Simeon Short, Sec.

This notice and the treasurer's records show that there were four quarters, or terms, in a year, which was the custom in other schools and persisted for the next half century. The quarter was the unit and students spoke of having attended school a certain number of quarters rather than years.

The "female assistant" during part of the Fitch period was Miss Amy Smith of Chelsea, Vermont, who was said to have been "a refined lady and a very good teacher." In an era when the education of women was still in an experimental stage, she had gone to Hanover to "keep house" for her two brothers, who were students in Dartmouth, and had followed their studies with them.⁹ She must also have had some advantages which Dartmouth did not offer, if she taught drawing and painting. French was not offered by the college at that time, but there were private instructors in the town, and it was considered a desirable accomplishment for young women. Judging from the academy treasurer's accounts, few enrolled for painting, perhaps because of the expense of supplies.

There is no indication that Amy Smith taught during the first quarter, but she was present in the summer of 1819 and Slafter says she was connected with the school "about three years." In the summer of 1822, advertised above, Mercy Burton was either preceptress, or assisted Miss Smith, and was paid \$15. The newspaper item seems to imply that a female assistant was employed only in the warm months, but there were occasionally a few girls in the school in winter.

Miss Smith lived, at least part of the time, with the Shorts, and the trustees paid her board. She was paid a

total of \$207 for the three years. After leaving Thetford she opened a private school for girls in Woodstock, Vermont, and eventually married Henry C. Denison, a prominent business man of that town, as his third wife. She died there in 1848, having borne six children, five of whom survived her.¹⁰

No tradition remains regarding assistants other than Amy Smith and Mercy Burton, but there are suggestive items. Soon after the end of the first term of 1819, there are two payments to J. or I. Kimball. Both of these sums are too large to have been paid to students, and one of them is for \$27.50, which is the amount paid to Amy Smith on three occasions, and to no one else at any time. There is also a payment of \$25 to W. White who may have been William White, a son of James, who had graduated from Dartmouth and was in the vicinity at the time.

The scholarship of Mr. Fitch indicates that preparation for college was one of the objects of establishing the school. Heretofore this had been accomplished largely by clergymen while in office, although such men as Judge Buckingham sometimes took students. The requirements for admission to Dartmouth in 1822 were that candidates must be

well versed in the Grammar of the English, Latin, and Greek Languages, in Virgil, Cicero's Orations, Sallust, the Greek Testament, Delzel's Collectanea Graeca, Latin and Greek Prosody, Arithmetic, Ancient and Modern Geography, and that he be able to accurately translate English into Latin.¹¹

With the responsibility of preparing students in these subjects, it seems unlikely that John Fitch could manage the various elements in the school at any time without assistance, for there is evidence that children as young as eight years were sometimes present. He may have employed the Lancasterian System which was in vogue at the time. By this method older students taught the young ones under the supervision of the principal or an assistant.¹²

Typical of the diversity of ages were, Isaac Hosford, who was twenty-five when he entered, and he paid tuition for his sister, who was fifteen; Rhoda Heaton, a

niece of Orange and William, was twenty-one, her sister nineteen, and a brother twelve; Roger Ranstead, the neighborhood tanner, had five children in the school at one time; Dr. Kendrick's daughter, Mary, was a little under eight when she entered.¹³ She was in school at different periods during four and a half years, and at one time for nine weeks in the winter. The number of small children who appear on the records points to the probability that parents preferred the academy to the district schools, which were crowded and uncomfortable. The academy teachers were probably more efficient also.

The treasurer's accounts also reveal that the tuition was \$2 a quarter for English studies and \$3 for Latin and Greek. Many, however, attended school for less than a quarter. One student paid twenty-five cents for one week, and some paid for two, or for three weeks, or for half a term. This called for much bookkeeping with small sums, and was further complicated by charging interest on lagging tuitions. Orange Heaton paid three cents for interest. His children were now having the "Advantages and Benefits derived by Education", and his twenty-year-old son, Barber, had thirty weeks of Latin, besides some English. The subjects included under English are not indicated, nor is there evidence of any musical activity, but with the musical training of the villagers, and Asa Burton's devotion to it, it is likely that there was some singing, at least at devotional exercises. It was too early for an instrument.

No accurate estimate can be made of the number of students present at any one time. Slafter thinks there may have been an average of fifty for the four quarters of the first year. In the summing up of the first financial year, money paid out is carefully itemized, but on the other side only the total, \$422, is given as "received from tuitions etc.", which obscures an estimate of attendance. The treasurer's account shows that at least forty-eight different students were in school at some time during the first year, and a good proportion of them for more than one term.

A "Charitable Fund" was established during the first year, perhaps as part of the original plan for the school.

The beginning is not clear, as the records show only the aggregate of sums contributed during "the last year." The church and congregation gave by the hand of Dr. Burton, the Female Cent Society by Mrs. Short, and an Agricultural Society by Dr. Kendrick; Mrs. Burton had bequeathed \$100, evidently for student aid, which was invested in a mortgage at 6% interest.

There were also contributions from "the Education Society in this place." This society had been organized "late in 1818" by ten un-named men at Dr. Burton's home. It was one of the many benevolent societies of the day, the mother society having been chartered by Massachusetts three years earlier. Vermont was giving it consideration, and a state society was organized the next year. Its object was to aid young men who wished to enter the ministry. It was constantly stimulated by the fear that in the rapidly growing West, only an uneducated ministry would be available; and it operated under the remarkably liberal principle, for the time, of serving the five leading denominations—Congregational, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, and Episcopal.

Frequent contributions were made by the Thetford church, both to the state society and to the academy fund, the latter being allocated for "education of pious youth." The amount contributed to the academy fund for the six years of this period was \$232, and cash was paid to beneficiaries in sums ranging from 75 cents to \$18. Not all those who had aid became clergymen, but no girls were helped. They could not become clergymen, nor at this time did they take classical subjects. But aid was given to a few girls by private individuals, especially by Short, Latham, and Reed.

The church was particularly interested in those students whose aim was the ministry. The earliest item in the church records regarding the academy is in December, 1818, two months before the opening. It reveals their eagerness to work with this new educational project. At this meeting,

Ye object of which was to adopt ye best plan to raise money
for ye extension of Christ's Kingdom throughout ye world,
it was voted to have a contribution on the first Sabbath in

each month, every alternate one to be for the education of pious young men at the Academy in Thetford fitting themselves for college and the ministry.

At first, contributions were handed to Judge Buckingham for the "Charitable Funds of Thetford Academy", but in 1822 the church decided to support a single student for one year. Subscriptions were to be paid in grain, clothing, board, or money. Captain Latham was to be the agent to receive and distribute the several articles, and a committee, including Dr. Burton and John Fitch, was to select the young man. Judge Buckingham had become a member of the church in 1818, John Fitch the next year, and now with Latham, Kendrick, Bartholomew, and Short, who became members this year, (1822), academy interests would be ably supported.

"Otis" Hovey of Thetford was chosen as their beneficiary, and ten months later the church voted to support him until he was ready for college. They were to pay his board, supply him with necessary books, pay his tuition, and provide whatever else he might need. Subsequent votes continued the aid.

Edmund Otis Hovey is one of the bright stars among the many in Thetford Academy's crown.¹⁴ Born in Hanover, he had come with his family to Thetford as a young lad. His father did not approve of his desire for an education, but finally gave him his freedom and \$10; and an uncle gave him a calf, which he sold. Graduating from Dartmouth in 1828, with some personal aid from Joseph Reed, and from the Andover Theological Seminary in 1831, he was ordained to go into the western country "with a roving commission."

As a pioneer missionary in Fountain County, Indiana, where there was no meeting house, school, nor newspaper, he organized four churches, day schools, promoted newspapers, and organized the Wabash Presbytery of four ministers. In 1832, sixteen acres of land having been given for the purpose, Hovey became one of the founders of Wabash College at Crawfordsville, where he was active for the remainder of his life as trustee and professor.

Accounts of his life stress not only his ability, and his devotion to the college, but also his charming personality.

Dartmouth, at its centennial celebration in 1869, conferred the degree of Doctor of Divinity upon him, and the citation declared that the college considered Wabash, "founded by Dartmouth graduates, the greatest and most beautiful fruit of her first century." Surely Thetford and her academy could claim a share in producing this fruit.

Slafter states that John Fitch prepared twelve men for college. More than twelve have been identified who were wholly or partly prepared.¹⁵ Besides Hovey, the following four were Thetford men:

Isaac Cummings, Jr., had begun his preparation at Kimball Union, but transferred to Thetford upon the opening of the academy. He entered Dartmouth and spent his last two college years at Middlebury, where he graduated in 1824. He became pastor of the Congregational church at Dover, New Hampshire, and died there in 1831 at the age of twenty-nine.

Isaac Hosford was graduated from Dartmouth in 1826, from Andover Seminary in 1829, and was pastor of several churches in Massachusetts, besides serving as city missionary in Lowell. During the last years of his life he did much toward the development of the village and church at North Thetford.

Roger Howard graduated from Dartmouth in 1829, and became an Episcopal clergyman. He had a wide experience in teaching and in pastoral work, and in 1869 was elected president of Norwich University. He is said to have been admirably fitted for the position, but resigned at the end of three years. One account of his life states that he could not adapt himself to the military atmosphere. Slafter, who knew him personally, says,

His eminence as a teacher, his profound learning, and his fidelity in the sacred duties of the ministry, should bring honor to his name . . . in his native town.

He received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from Dartmouth in 1869 with his academy mate, Hovey, and was a member of Phi Beta Kappa. These three men—Cummings, Hosford and Howard—were descendants of early settlers of Thetford.

The fourth Thetford man was Charles Hopkins, son of postmaster Thomas. He was graduated from Dartmouth in 1827, was admitted to the bar in 1830, and practiced in Windsor, Vermont, and other places. He was connected with the Land Office and the Pension Bureau in Washington for some years.

Barber Heaton, whose first name was Orange, did not take a college course, but appears on a list of non-graduate medical students of Dartmouth in 1825. A college course was not then required for entrance to the medical school. In 1827 he received his medical degree from the University of Vermont. He practiced in Chicago, and possibly in Virden, Illinois, but little is known about him.

Although at the time many of the Lyme young men went to Kimball Union, two were prepared by John Fitch, and also entered Dartmouth. They were Dr. Roger N. Lambert, class of 1825, son of the Lyme pastor, and Rev. John K. Converse, class of 1827. Mr. Converse became pastor of the Congregational church in Burlington, and principal of the Burlington Female Seminary. He was an active worker for the "Underground Railroad" over a long period.

Others known to have been prepared by Mr. Fitch were:

Benjamin G. Baldwin, of Bradford, Vermont, Dartmouth, 1827, lawyer, Potsdam, New York; Surrogate of St. Lawrence County.

Asher Bliss, of West Fairlee, Vermont, Amherst 1829, Andover Seminary, 1832, missionary to the Seneca Indians.

Asa Brainard, of Danville, Vermont, two years in Dartmouth, graduated from the University of Vermont, 1828, principal of a private school in Potsdam, New York, for many years.

George Burnap, of Merrimac, New Hampshire, Harvard, A.B. and A.M., 1824, D.D. 1849. Regent of the University of Maryland, a founder of the Maryland Historical Society, and trustee of Peabody Institute.

Lucius Doolittle, of Lyndon, Vermont, University of Vermont, A.M., 1838, Episcopal clergyman, "Originator of Bishop's College" in the Province of Quebec, "an untiring promotor of education."

Leonard M. Fitch, of Danville, Vermont, University of Vermont, A.M., 1826, doctor and dentist.

Abram Marsh—See Appendix IV, List of Thetford Principals.

Charles C. Marsh, of Hartford, Vermont, Dartmouth 1828,
lawyer in New York City.

John Stocker, of Danville, Vermont, A.B., A.M., Middlebury
1830, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1832.

Three of these men had followed John Fitch from Danville, and a fourth one will be considered later. This list shows that at least sixteen men entered college during this period, eleven going to Dartmouth.

All the local boys chose Dartmouth, which might be expected. Since 1784 there had been occasional students from the town, and several were there at the time of the opening of the academy. The college was near home and would be familiar to them, and there was the possibility of self-boarding with frequent contributions from the home larder. The ten or twelve miles to Hanover was not much of a walk for a country boy, and probably many of them crossed the river on their own power. The tradition is that Roger Howard was one of these, not being able to pay the few pennies for ferry or toll bridge.

Entrance to Dartmouth was secured by means of an oral examination by various members of the small faculty, and might include but a few questions in mathematics, and a few lines of the required classics, giving proof of acquaintance with the subjects.¹⁶ During the first three years in college, two-thirds of the time was devoted to Latin and Greek, the senior year being occupied with "metaphysics, theology and political law." "The subject matter best adapted to form the basis of a liberal education was thought to be determined for all time",¹⁷ and the classics must always be "the center of instruction."¹⁸ There was no choice of subjects.

Nathan Lord, who became president of the college in 1828, felt that college "was not designed for individuals who were to engage in mercantile, mechanical or agricultural operations."¹⁹ He later modified this view somewhat, but considered moral and religious training "the one all-important function of the college."²⁰ Attendance was required at two services on Sunday, and a Biblical exercise on Monday morning, besides chapel every weekday morning. This was also the program for Thetford for many years.

Commencements at Hanover were festivals which were attended by the countryside, and probably prospective students from Thetford had been present on such occasions. There they could be entertained by side-shows and refreshment booths as at a country fair. There is a tale of a local man who attended every commencement for fifty years. The size of the college may be realized by the fact that in 1819 there were but twenty-five graduates.

The identity of many academy students of this period is lost. A letter from Mercy Burton shows that she was in school in 1820 and gives a glimpse of the contemporary atmosphere.

Squire Short has nine ladies boarding with him
Preceptor Fitch and wife are good as ever. I recite to him The young ladies walk frequently but I do not join them some very spruce beaux, I assure you.

[She had read the Scottish Chiefs and Thaddeus of Warsaw, but thinks] it is mis-spending time it does not leave imprinted on the mind anything valuable or improving.²¹

The distinguished career of Justin Smith Morrill has served to preserve his record. Coming from the adjoining town of Strafford, he was in school for one term in 1825, having Otis Hovey for a roommate. Circumstances prevented preparation for college, but after a term in another school and some years of business experience, he represented Vermont in Congress, serving six terms in the House and the same number in the Senate. He was a statesman of high order, an authority on finance, and a man of fine personality. Three colleges, including Dartmouth, honored him with degrees.

Morrill is known as the "father of agricultural colleges" because of his sponsorship of the Act of 1862 which established them, judged in 1919 by a high authority as

probably the most important single specific enactment ever made in the interest of education, recognising that the common affairs of life are proper subjects with which to educate or train men.²²

The establishment of the Vermont State Agricultural College, following this Act, resulted in arousing a greater

interest in scientific agriculture in the state, an interest which ultimately contributed to the fortunes of Thetford Academy.

The identity of another student has survived under contrasting circumstances. Silas Davison, Jr., had come from Danville to be under the tutelage of John Fitch. He had served an apprenticeship as a "joiner" and

When about 18, his mind was impressed with a sense of the situation of lost sinners. He became seriously exercised with the important duty of preaching the gospel.

He was in school from late 1819 until April, 1821, when the item appears in the treasurer's book, "To one week in Latin and taken sick."

After a distressing illness of "Spotted Fever", he died, and was greatly mourned by the students. "On the quarter day succeeding his death" an oration was delivered in his memory by his schoolmate, George W. Burnap, which not only reveals Davison's character, but is an example, perhaps an extreme one, of the rhetoric and oratory which was taught and admired in that day.

'Tis not to wreath the laurel that decorates the warrior's brow, nor to drop the tear of sympathy at the remembrance of one who in battle has expired in the arms of victory, that I now address you.

Too often has the pen of the eulogist been prostituted to emblazon the splendors of unreal greatness, and clothe in Virtue's robe the deformities of vice and the eccentricities of human folly.

After describing Davison's "meek and christian-like deportment", and his "finer sensibilities of soul", he concludes:

My friends! When you saw the body of our friend, and late companion, lie motionless in death . . . when we saw those lips, on whose monitory accents we had often dwelt with delight, sealed in eternal silence; did they not, with a voice, though silent, yet more impressive than the thunder of heaven, address the ear of fancy, in language like this?

Kindred heir of immortality! if thou hast any act of reconciliation with thy God . . . any deed of benevolence to perform to thy fellow men, seize the present moment for its accomplishment. Ere long you sleep with me.²³

III

John Fitch left Thetford about March 1, 1825, at the end of six years as preceptor, having received a total of \$1800 as salary and \$180 as equivalent of house rent. There are indications that attendance fell during the last of the period, and in the summer of 1825 there was only \$6.15 in the treasury. But the condition of the school as shown in the 1827 catalogue seems to have been good. Many years later, Judge Short, speaking of the founding, said in an address to the students,

By all our citizens, they were considered proud days for our little village and town, and it was believed the foundation was laid for an institution that would shed a moral and intellectual loveliness over our society, and would influence its character through all time.²⁴

At the end of the first year of the school, Asa Burton had expressed himself more enthusiastically, if not as elegantly.

I do not know of any place, or Academy, where beneficiaries can enjoy greater privileges, while fitting for college, than at this Academy. We have a very convenient building for the purpose, furnished with a Bell, a handsome Library, tho small, to which students have access, one of the best instructors on account of scholarship & piety, and a good religious Society & neighborhood, & a good regulation on the Sabbath & frequent conference meetings It is a day of wonders; the signs of the times evidently, to me, teach us the glorious day is dawning & approaching fast.²⁵

Now, in 1825, the pioneer era, on which so much depended, was over. It has been said of John Fitch that he "brought the school to the front rank by his thorough instruction and efficient management."²⁶ Had he been a less seasoned and experienced man the story might have been a different one. Several events had also served to put the school on an increasingly solid foundation. The charter was received from the state in 1819, while Joseph Reed was representative. This constituted the trustees a "body politic and corporate" which could hold property to the amount of \$10,000, and could add to their number until the whole "shall not exceed fifteen", of which any seven could constitute a quorum. Of great advantage to the

institution, then and always, was the provision that the real and personal estate "shall be free and forever exempted from all taxes", which actually represents a contribution by the town to the assets of the school.

In 1820, responding to the petition quoted earlier, the state awarded to the school the rents and profits from lands in the towns of Washington and Chelsea, which Vermont had sequestered for the benefit of a county grammar school;²⁷ and in the next year, 1821, the school was declared by the state to be a grammar school "to all intents and purposes", thus making it more permanently eligible to the use of the lands.²⁸ This, however, was qualified by the reservation that the state could at any future Assembly change the award.

These acts gave the school a standing and dignity which must have greatly affected its immediate future, and would be likely to inspire the trustees with confidence. The lands yielded about \$148 annually, which, when compared with the value of money at the time, was a substantial sum. Collection presented some difficulties. Tenants were not necessarily permanent. There is also evidence that a personal journey to the two towns, twenty and thirty miles distant, had to be made occasionally. But they lay on the route to the capital, and doubtless the various representatives, who were so often trustees as well, could act as collectors. There were no bank checks, nor money orders, and no parcel post. Another source of income for a few years was the rental of the assembly hall to the Freemasons, which came in sums ranging from \$14 to \$25, but with no rate indicated.

Changes had taken place in the village during these six years, some of which were undoubtedly influenced by the presence of the school. Perhaps in view of Judge Short's "proud days", the selectmen had, in 1819, taken advantage of an act of the Assembly and made Thetford Hill a legal village for the purpose of causing the cattle, horses, sheep, swine, and geese to be "restrained from going at large." The village had also stretched toward the south and east by at least six houses, which contributed new students and provided new accommodations for those coming from outside.

Thetford Hill was now a miniature cultural center, with educational advantages which few cities had, and the town was distinguished as being the seat of an academy. Connection was maintained with Dartmouth, and students were also entering other colleges. Contact with a higher grade than the district school was being made by children, both male and female, sometimes by every child in a given family who was old enough to attend school.

The church was quickened by a new and tangible interest, the fruits of which were visible, the earlier violent disagreements had quieted down, and the trustees were cooperating to establish the school on a firm footing. Tea-drinking and quilting parties now had a new and absorbing subject for discussion.

A measure of "moral and intellectual loveliness" had come to Thetford Hill.

CHAPTER 2—REFERENCES

- ¹The idea of a public high school was not widely accepted until after 1850, but Boston and Portland, Maine, were experimenting with such schools in the early 1820s. Knight, Edgar W., *Education in the United States*, p. 384.
- ²Academy had become an accepted term and was often interchangeable with seminary. It is derived from a public grove in Athens, presented by Academus, where Plato taught his followers. In general, it signifies a place where something is taught.
- ³Rev. Carlos Slafter, b. Thetford, July 21, 1825, student in T. A. under Hiram Orcutt, Dartmouth 1849, ordained Episcopal Deacon in Trinity Church, Boston, but taught in the Dedham, Mass., High School for forty years. Died Hyde Park, Mass., July 18, 1909. He was a brother of Edmund F., a future benefactor of T. A. See note 17, Chapter 1.
- ⁴Address to the school, 1849, Ms.
- ⁵Orcutt, Hiram, *Letters from Vermont*, Congregational Journal. Concord, N. H., 1843, Oct. 2.
- ⁶Testimony of Leonard B. Emerson, contractor.
- ⁷Traditional. Bills exist for rum used during the erection of the meeting house at Post Mills, 1818.
- ⁸Compiled from Wild, Rev. Azel W., *History of Vermont Churches*, MS., Davis, Emerson, *Biographical Sketches of the New England Congregational Pastors. History of the Mendon, Mass., Association of Congregational Ministers*. Letters from Mrs. Catherine A. Elkin (Mrs. William L.) of New Haven, Conn., newspaper items, Thetford vital, land and tax records.
- Nancy Jane Fitch married Lewis Elkin of New Orleans and her only surviving child, William L. Elkin, was educated in European Universities, and was called to Yale for special astronomical work in which he was already eminent. His contributions to the science were outstanding. In 1917 he came to Thetford to pay his respects to the old academy, and the home of great-grandparents, grandparents, and the birthplace of a grandmother, and his mother.
- ⁹Comstock, John M., historian of Chelsea, letter to the author.
- ¹⁰Dana, Henry S., *History of Woodstock*. State vital records. Baldwin and Clift, Descendants of George Denison of Stonington, 1881.
- ¹¹Dartmouth College catalogue of 1822.
- ¹²The system became popular and its sponsor, Joseph Lancaster, came to the United States at about the time of the opening of Thetford Academy to encourage the use of the method.

- ¹³Compiled from treasurer's records, and family records.
- ¹⁴Chapman, Rev. George T., D.D., *Sketches of the Alumni of Dartmouth College*, 1867, p. 20. Osborn and Gronert, *History of Wabash College*, p. 20. *The Wabash*, college periodical, October 1898.
- ¹⁵Alumni records of the various colleges; town and family records.
- ¹⁶Richardson, Leon Burr, *History of Dartmouth College*, p. 430.
- ¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 429.
- ¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 390.
- ¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 389.
- ²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 390.
- ²¹Dartmouth College Archives.
- ²²Bailey, Liberty H., article, *Cyclopedia of American Agriculture*, Vol. IV, p. 411.
- ²³An *Oration on the death of Silas Davison*, 10 pp., Danville Imprint, 1822. Author's collections. Burnap was a brother of Mrs. Joseph Reed. "Monitory accents" may indicate that Davison was a monitorial teacher for young students.
- ²⁴Ms., 1849, author's collections.
- ²⁵Letter to Rev. Elisha Smith, *op. cit.*
- ²⁶Wild, Rev. Azel W., *op. cit.*
- ²⁷Acts of 1820, Chap. 123, p. 209.
- ²⁸Acts of 1821, Chap. 125, p. 209.



Chapter III

1825 - 1843

I

THE DEPARTURE OF John Fitch in 1825 marks a change in the administration of the school. In contrast to his continuous service of six years, there were now to be sixteen men in the preceptor's chair during the next eighteen years, some of whom were undergraduates. The frequent adjustments of the trustees and the community to so many preceptors of differing personalities and abilities would be likely to present problems, and it would be disturbing to lose quickly those who were especially successful. This was an experience which Thetford was to have many times.

One cause of these changes was that teaching had not yet become a profession. Men attended college with the intention of becoming clergymen or lawyers, and sought teaching positions only as a convenient means of earning money to enable them to proceed with their education, or to fill the time before finding a professional opening. Even college presidents and professors were clergymen first.

This often meant that a young man, taking such a position as Thetford offered, was inexperienced. He was likely, also, to be unmarried and would not have a home as a basis for his work, nor the aid of a wife. Generally speaking, throughout the entire history of the school, wives of the principals often bore much responsibility, and sometimes deeply influenced the students. In this respect the situation was unlike that of a modern high school principal.

The tenure of the principals was also to be affected by a new financial policy. John Fitch had been paid a stated salary. He knew what to expect and the trustees knew

what they must pay him, even if the school was small. After his departure no tuitions are recorded by the treasurer, and for more than eighty years it was the custom for the principal to collect and retain them in lieu of a salary, and to assume the financial responsibility of the school. It was a game of chance. If he were not popular, the attendance fell and his income fell with it. This plan was customary in other schools, although occasionally it had been considered unsatisfactory.

Various efforts were made by the principals to solve the problems which the change brought. The wife was often the preceptress. The principal's family boarded the teachers, and perhaps some of the students. Sometimes the Shorts cared for an unmarried principal, but that would mean that he must have cash for room and board. There was no provision for housing a principal, and with each new one this problem must be solved. Some of them were obliged to purchase homes. And there was always the danger that a principal would sacrifice the interest of the school to eke out his own living.

There were, however, some advantages in such a position as Thetford offered. The social standing of a young man from college, either graduate or undergraduate, would be secure in the village, and sometimes approached that of the clergyman, especially if he planned to be one himself. Some of the principals came from back-country farms and would welcome the change of status. It was an advantage to be accepted in a group of cultivated and prosperous families such as those of Thetford Hill.

Curriculums were limited during the early years of this period. College preparation followed the narrow lines of the classics, and that the English subjects were often elemental is evident from the age of many of the students. Courses, such as later became the rule, could not easily have been sustained because of the extreme poverty of the students. It was common practice for boys to work several months on a farm in order to earn money for one term of "schooling", and subjects were necessarily arranged to fit a term of eleven or twelve weeks. College courses were also arranged to allow stu-

dents to go out and teach in a district school in the winter, or as often happened, to take charge of an academy for a term.

The second principal was Carlos Smith, who had been out of college for three years, and had some experience in teaching. His father had studied theology with Asa Burton, and thus Thetford was known to him, and to his sister, who was his preceptress. Mr. Smith remained for two years and later became a clergyman. No records of any kind are available for the two years except a few brief items in the treasurer's book. We know the identity of this successor to John Fitch only through Slafter, who says he was an excellent teacher and a refined gentleman.

It was the era of academies, and fortunately six catalogues were issued in this period from 1825 to 1843, which testify to the growing importance of the school. These catalogues were published at the expense of the principals and were advertisements calculated to attract students. Having established a reputation, the school now not only provided for Thetford young people, but began to draw patronage from a wider area. It was soon to become a rival of Kimball Union and of other academies, including Bradford, twelve miles away.

The earliest Thetford catalogue known at this writing was published in 1827 and is so rare that but one copy has been found by the writer. It is in the Widener Library of Harvard University, and an analysis of it will give the earliest view of the school at work. It was then in its ninth year and Abram Marsh was the preceptor. He had prepared for college under John Fitch and had married a niece of Judge Short. He, therefore, knew the conditions under which he would work. He remained two years, and Slafter says that "the school prospered under his care" and that "he was a man of dignified and ministerial mien." In fact, he became a clergyman.

Judged by later accomplishments of some of the trustees, that group was a capable one. Dr. Burton, now in his seventies and in poor health, was second on the

list, the president being his step-son, Rev. Charles White. White was a son of the third Mrs. Burton and had spent the latter part of his boyhood in Thetford. After graduating from Dartmouth and from Andover Seminary, he had been engaged as colleague to Dr. Burton with the understanding that he should succeed him as permanent pastor.

In contrast to his step-father, Mr. White seems to have had a more artistic temperament and was "stately in appearance, in carriage, and in manners."¹ He later became the second president of Wabash College, which Otis Hovey had helped to found. White's book of 1853, *Essays in Literature and Ethics*, reveals his enthusiasm for teaching and his interest in the revelations of science, and he exclaims,

"Mighty future! Grant us a vision of the great intellectual and moral magnificance which thou shalt assist to create. . . ."²

His comprehensive hopes for the expanding West included the

"creation of eminent scholarship, the improvement and extension of primary education, and the establishment of a superior and Christian Civilization."³

Baxter Perry, the young pastor at Lyme, across the river, a graduate of Harvard, and of Andover Seminary, was winning an honored name in the locality by his work in the ministry. He was to have only three more years of life, but was the progenitor of a family of educators, the immediate members of which were to be students at Thetford.⁴

Joseph Tracy, the young pastor of the Post Mills and neighboring West Fairlee churches, a Dartmouth graduate, had studied theology with Dr. Burton. He was soon to become the editor of the *Vermont Chronicle*, which "immediately took rank as one of the ably edited journals of the country", and which must be freely consulted by any historian of the region.

He later became the secretary of the American Colonization Society, the object of which was the exportation of Negroes to Liberia, there to found a Christian republic.

This was one of the desperate efforts to solve the growing problem of slavery. Dr. Tracy was an ardent supporter of the plan and was one of the founders of Liberia College, the first missionary college in Africa. He was a scholarly writer and was to publish several books, one of which, *The Great Awakening*, is an authority on certain phases of the religious history of New England.⁵

Dr. David Palmer, lately come to Thetford to be near a school for his children, was a man of refinement and taste. He was soon to become an incorporator of, and professor in, one of the earliest medical schools of Vermont, at Woodstock.⁶ His interest in education was to be carried on in future years by his Thetford grandchildren, the Fletcher sisters, who excelled as teachers.

Abiathar G. Britton was a lawyer in Orford, a neighboring town in New Hampshire, where he was a man of influence in legal and financial affairs. Presbury West, Jr., son-in-law of Dr. Burton, was a lawyer, and treasurer of the board of trustees. Besides these, there were "Hon. Lyman Fitch", who had earned his title as a legislator and justice, Dr. Kendrick, and Squires Short, Heaton and Bartholomew, all of whom had been tried and not found wanting. There was also General Frederick Smith of adjoining Strafford, who was an officer in the militia and a tavern keeper with a large farm. The principal brings the number to fourteen. Thomas Hopkins had died shortly before the catalogue was issued, and Judge Buckingham is missing from the list, at the age of seventy.

There were four clergymen, three lawyers, two doctors, two tavern keepers, and three others who were not professional men but had ample qualifications of another kind. While they were local men, they were not all of Thetford. Each one was capable of clear thinking and definite action with the possible exception of Presbury West. He was a youthful man, inclined to be changeable. But with a growing family, he would be likely to lend his support to the school.

In the future there were to be periods when weakness and indecision characterized the board as a whole, but

this group probably was never to be surpassed and seldom equalled during the century, in ability, and in variety of talents and experience. In view of this, it is difficult to explain their abandonment of the financial management of the school.

Several possible reasons come to mind. Custom probably played a part in the decision. Other schools expected the principal to live on the income from tuitions. To be sure it seemed to place the emphasis on the number of students rather than on the quality of teaching. But in order to obtain numbers, the quality of teaching must be kept high. Collection of tuitions may have been difficult for a trustee treasurer who was busy with his own affairs, and a principal could more easily make contact with students and follow up the lagging ones. Book-keeping was demanding, with sums as small as a few pennies, and trustees could not spare the necessary time. John Fitch, with a wife, a small child, and four step-children, may have found it difficult to live on \$300, and the next principal could demand more. The small balance of \$6.15 in the treasury may have influenced the trustees to try a different method of support.

The prospectus in this earliest catalogue is general and is evidently capable of adaptation to the demands of students of varying ages.

The systematic and thorough course of education pursued in this institution, induces the Trustees to hope for Publick confidence and a liberal and merited patronage. Its increasing prosperity, since the services of the present Instructors have been secured, is no small recommendation of its character. The valuable chemical lectures by DR. PALMER, and its other advantages, it is believed, render this school one of the first order. The various branches of a Classical and English education are taught; Latin and Greek languages; Reading, Composition and Declamation once in two weeks; Geography with instruction on the Globes; Mathematics; Rhetoric; Natural and Moral Philosophy; Chemistry and Astronomy; together with Painting on paper and velvet, and fine Needlework, Lace, &c.

The winter term will begin on the 10th of December. The summer term of the female department will commence on the 10th of May next, under the care of Miss Poole.

Of the seventy-one different students, thirty-four were of Thetford, and fourteen nearby towns were represented, besides Watervliet and Troy, New York, and Plymouth, Massachusetts. One who knows the families of Thetford soon discovers that young relatives who had emigrated to New York and beyond, were sent back to the academy for their education. This will be apparent for at least three decades.

Miss Poole was from Hollis, New Hampshire. It would not be easy to secure a capable preceptress when there was so little education available for women, and the school later trained many for its own employment. The announcement implies that the female department was still a separate one, operating only in the warm months.

Ten young men were preparing for college, two of whom, sons of Captain Latham and Dr. Palmer, went to Dartmouth. Both became doctors, the Palmer son having the appropriate name of Benjamin Rush. He followed in the footsteps of his father and became a trustee of the Woodstock medical college. Girls were not yet taking classical subjects, but twenty-one were attending Dr. Palmer's lectures on chemistry. Members of the community also attended the lectures, suggesting the Lyceum which was launched at about this time in Massachusetts and was destined to influence the development of public schools. These lectures were also suggestive of the adult education of the twentieth century.

During this year, 1827, Vermont made its first real effort to centralize school administration, and organized a Board of Commissioners. This commission recommended supervision:

. . . . the beneficial effects of subjecting every school to the supervision of an intelligent and judicious committee, are too obvious to require the aid of argument.

In response to an act passed at this time, a town committee of five was elected to supervise the schools of Thetford, of which Charles White, Joseph Tracy, Simeon Short, and Timothy Bartholomew were members. The next year White and Tracy had left the town, but Dr.

Palmer and Judge Short were still on the committee, and remained on it until the law was repealed in 1833. The election of five members of the academy board testified to their leadership in local educational matters. Among their duties was the examination of prospective teachers for character, for "literary qualifications" and for ability to govern schools.

II

The catalogue for the next year, 1828, expands slightly and shows an assistant preceptor in the person of Charles Hopkins, son of postmaster Thomas, who had prepared for college under John Fitch. Slafter said that "it is thought" that he had served as preceptor for a time. Dr. Palmer's chemistry lectures seem to be confined to the "ladies" and twenty-three out of twenty-six were taking the course. He also held an unexplained "medical class" for "gentlemen" and of thirty-nine, thirty-five were taking that course. This may have been an early attempt to introduce physiology, or anatomy, to which "ladies" would probably not be eligible.

It is to be regretted that positive identification of textbooks used in the school prior to 1842 has not been possible. It is likely that Dr. Palmer had done pioneer work for a school of this type in presenting his scientific lectures, and that they were probably illustrated by demonstrations, and possibly by charts, which were his private property. In discussing a few textbooks, which were in general use at the time, two conditions must be borne in mind—the extreme youth of some of the early academy pupils, and the fact that they often used books which they happened to have at home. These conditions make it likely that the famous old New England Primer would appear. Stone says that it was used in district schools in the State as late as 1820.

But there were notable successors to the Primer. Noah Webster's "speller", which also contained some reading matter, would be likely to be found, either in families, or by purchase for students. First published in 1783, it went through many editions under different titles, and reached the surprising distribution of twenty-four million copies. One of the ultimate effects of this

speller was a "craze" for spelling bees, or matches, which persisted for many years, and at this writing, are still recalled by older persons.

Webster was a Yale graduate of 1778, and was a man of many talents. In the early days of the Republic there was little uniformity in the usage, spelling, and pronunciation of certain words. Some English words had been dropped and new American words had appeared. Webster conceived the idea of reforming and stabilizing the American language by compiling a dictionary for the purpose. He issued a small one in 1806, and after twenty years of hard work, including nearly a year in England, he issued a larger one in 1827 which was "epoch-making" and was the foundation of all our American dictionaries.

These early dictionaries would, in time, be sure to reach some of the Thetford households. Before this the few who used them depended upon imported ones or reprints of them. Enoch Slade, elected an Academy trustee in 1839, used one which was published in Edinburgh in 1797, and was probably the only one he ever owned.

Clifton Johnson, in his *Old-time Schools and School-books*, (1904), names Webster and Caleb Bingham as the most successful makers of textbooks in the early years. Bingham's "Young Lady's Accidence, and introduction to English Grammar" was "designed principally for the use of the Fair Sex, though proper for either." A copy has been found in a Thetford attic. Bingham's readers, *The American Preceptor*, and *The Columbian Orator*, were also widely used. The latter contained the oft-quoted lines,

You'd scarce expect one of my age
To speak in public on the stage.

In *The Child's Companion* he added an appendix with a list of "Improprieties in pronunciation, common among the people of New England" such as gal for girl, tater for potato, afeard for afraid. These "improprieties" have been preserved in Rowland Robinson's *Stories of Vermont*.

Bingham must have been known in Thetford by reputation, and perhaps personally. He graduated from Dartmouth, in a class of four, in 1792, three years later than Judge Buckingham, and taught there in the Charity School for Indian Students during the next year. He soon opened a school for girls in Boston, and later operated a book store in the city. His "Young Ladies Accidence" was the earliest English Grammar to be used in the Boston schools.

Jedediah Morse, Yale 1783, a Doctor of Divinity, and a founder of the Andover Theological Seminary, was the earliest author of American Geographies. A copy of his "A New System of Geography, Ancient and Modern", 23rd edition, 1822, has appeared in a Thetford attic. It shows evidence of hard usage and is inscribed with the names of several of Captain Latham's children. All the early texts were small in dimension, and this one is a 7" x 4" volume of nearly four hundred pages, and is cyclopedic in scope. It was brought down to date by including a condensed report of the United States census of 1820. There were then twenty-four states, and among the tables is a census of slaves. Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts and Ohio were the only states without them, and Virginia had the largest number, more than four hundred and twenty-five thousand.

Geographies did not usually contain maps before the mid-nineteenth century, but were accompanied by separate atlases. Globes were used and records show that they were purchased for the Academy during its second year, probably a pair, one being a celestial one. They were undoubtedly procured from James Wilson of nearby Bradford. Wilson was the first maker of globes in the United States, issuing his first edition five years before the Academy opened. Geographies usually began with the solar system, gradually coming down to earth, which was in opposition to the modern idea of beginning with the child's surroundings. However, an atlas for the Malte-Brun Geography dated 1836, Hartford, Connecticut, and used in Thetford, carries an advertisement of its own

“peculiar excellencies instead of beginning with astronomy, it starts from the pupil’s own door Those who have witnessed the success of this book in schools, want no other evidence of its claims to the patronage of an enlightened public.”

The author, who was so far ahead of his times, was Samuel Goodrich who wrote under the name of Peter Parley. In this Geography he had adapted some of his material from a French author, which explains its title.

Reading and writing were the chief reasons for holding early elementary schools and it is surprising to learn that neither geography nor arithmetic was required. In Massachusetts the first enactment of a law requiring arithmetic was in 1789, only thirty years before Thetford Academy opened. Warren Colburn’s *Intellectual Arithmetic*, 1821, was another epoch-making book, as it determined the character of subsequent arithmetics, and its sale is said to have been “prodigious.” Johnson says that heretofore arithmetic had been “scarcely intelligible cyphering.”

In 1796 the mathematical requirements for entrance to Dartmouth were only the “fundamental rules of arithmetic,” and in 1822, when the earliest Thetford Academy students entered the college, they studied arithmetic and algebra in their freshman year.

One might ask how text books were procured by Thetford in those early years. Hanover had a book store, naturally, long before Thetford Academy opened. Country stores, which were astonishingly like small-scale twentieth century department stores, often carried them. It is likely that Latham and Kendrick included them in the “stock” which they periodically brought from Boston with their two, or four, horse teams.

III

No records of the school have been found for the years between 1828 and 1835, but Slafter and a newspaper item reveal that in 1833 the preceptor was James Kent Shipherd, whose short career made a deep impression on the community. Thetford had not been unknown to him as his father had been associated with Asa Burton and Judge Buckingham on the board of trustees of Middle-

bury College. James came to Thetford while still a member of the junior class of the college and was indirectly the occasion of an exodus from Thetford which took several promising families to the West.

At this time his brother, John J. Shipherd, was engaged in recruiting suitable families in the East to join in founding a colony in sparsely settled Ohio.⁷ The purpose of the colony was to develop a Christian school which should practice extreme self-denial in order to contribute as largely as possible to the evangelizing of the West. It operated on a radical social platform, both young men and young women being admitted, and eventually colored students were welcomed. The school soon became known as Oberlin College. In the course of his search for colonists, John Shipherd had naturally visited Thetford, where his brother was teaching, and had secured families from that town and from Lyme. Thetford men also contributed \$150 toward this missionary project.⁸

James Shipherd, of Thetford, died early in 1834 at Judge Short's home, and an obituary gives a picture of the asceticism which many serious-minded young men were practicing. After a religious experience accompanied by "intense anguish", he had

aimed at a high standard of moral excellence.
Especially did he strive to keep under and bring into subjection, the body, lest by indulgence, it should hinder his progress in piety and knowledge. In June, 1832, he took charge of an Academy at Thetford, Vt., and in that station continued his happy and useful labors until November last, when he was unexpectedly laid aside from his work, in consequence of a sudden cold, which settled immediately and unmoveably upon his lungs. It is believed that the rigid course of diet and exercise which he had adopted.
was the means of enfeebling his naturally slender constitution he relinquished his hold upon earth and sought only for preparation to meet his Savior; spending much of his time in self-examination and prayer
There was one subject only, that caused him anxiety, which was the condition of impenitent sinners, and particularly his pupils, saying he hoped his death might be blessed to their conversion.⁹

Slafter says that he was much lamented, and Capt. Latham gave his name to the next son born in his large family.

Apparently neither Shipherd nor his successor, Jacob Chapman, issued a catalogue, but the next principal, Jonas DeF. Richards, issued one in 1835 which shows a notable addition to the curriculum of the school. It announced that

Special pains are bestowed on such as are qualifying themselves to teach, and familiar instructions are given respecting the conduct and government of schools.

At that time there was much interest in improving schools, and periodicals were being launched for the purpose. *The American Journal of Education*, founded in 1826, was vigorously advocating a teaching profession, the lessening of emphasis on Latin and Greek, and encouragement of education for women. Successful teachers in the past had been dependent upon their own natural gifts. But now their training was receiving a share of attention in the discussions, and a new type of school was being developed at Concord in Thetford Academy's own State, where the young pastor, Samuel Read Hall, had opened a teacher's "Seminary" in 1823. Later, in 1829, he had published his lectures on School-Keeping, the first professional book for teachers published in America.¹⁰

There was a triangular connection between the two Shipherds and Hall. When John J. Shipherd was laying his plans for the school in the Ohio wilderness, he had investigated Hall, had been much impressed with his ideas and his personality, and had invited him to become the first president of the new Oberlin "Institute." Upon hearing that Hall would not be free for a year, James Shipherd of Thetford was asked to administer the Oberlin project until Hall should arrive. It happened that both James Shipherd and Hall declined the appointment in the end,¹¹ but Shipherd must have been well acquainted with Hall's ideas about training teachers and could hardly have failed to know of his book.

Jonas Richards had taken charge of the Thetford school in the Spring of 1834 and his catalogue was published in the summer of 1835. Whether teacher training was introduced by him, or earlier by Shipherd, or by Chapman, it can be said that it was in operation by the mid-thirties.

It is not mentioned, however, in the next three catalogues, for 1838, 1839, and 1842.

Slafter says that Richards had some experience in teaching before he came to Thetford, and that he was

an excellent type of the academy preceptor of the day
. . . . that he managed the school admirably and did
much to elevate its character and give it a becoming dignity.

His catalogue declares that

This Institution is now in a condition highly prosperous.
No pains or expense is spared by the Trustees or the
Instructors in furnishing every facility for the successful
prosecution of the sciences.

He was another example of men who taught as a means of earning money with which to prepare for a profession, and he became a "highly respectable clergyman."

Among the trustees in 1835 were the first from the Dartmouth faculty, Alpheus Crosby and Ira Young. Professor Crosby was a young man of twenty-five, who had been appointed to the chair of Greek two years earlier, in 1833; and Professor Young, ten years older, had been appointed to the chair of mathematics at the same time. They had been class and college mates of Thetford men and doubtless knew the school. For a Dartmouth teacher to be a trustee of Thetford meant considerable inconvenience. Twelve miles each way by chaise or horseback, on country roads, was fatiguing and time-consuming. Testimony of a trustee in later years shows that it was sometimes necessary to spend the night in Thetford.

Records are not complete, but Professor Crosby evidently served fifteen years or more, while Professor Young's service was slightly less. They were also on the Kimball Union Board and gave much time to that school. Dartmouth professors were over-burdened during these years, and it is difficult to understand how they could serve both schools. There was now a stronger bond than usual between the college and the academy. Besides these two trustees, both the principal and his assistant, Samuel Pierce, were Dartmouth men; and of the nineteen men in the classical division, ten were

about to enter Dartmouth, including two sons of Nathan Lord, the president of the college.¹²

It is not generally recalled that young Indians were occasionally prepared in Thetford for Dartmouth. Because of its charter, the college was under obligations to provide for "the education and instruction of youths of the Indian tribes in this land." At this time the preparatory department for them, known as Moore's Charity School, was temporarily suspended, and the few Indians who came to Hanover were sent to nearby academies. They were given English names, which tends to obscure their identity.

The earliest one known to have been in Thetford was called Mavis Pierce, and appears in the 1835 catalogue. Papers exist indicating that his expenses were paid by the U. S. Office of Indian Affairs, under the Department of War. In December, 1836, fifty dollars was received for the purpose by Lyman Fitch, who may have been his guardian. Pierce graduated from Dartmouth in 1840 with four Thetford classmates, including Edmund Slafter. He was a Seneca chief, and at the time, was said by President Lord to be "the best Indian I have ever seen, intelligent, pious, stable, a good scholar." He went back to his people, near Buffalo, and became a lawyer. In 1862 he sent his son, Mavis, Jr., to Thetford, who later attended the Chandler Scientific School at Dartmouth for two years. There were probably others, since students were listed from Canada, and may have been St. Francis Indians, some of whom were known to have been in Dartmouth.¹³

Under Richards in 1835 there were one hundred and thirty-four different students, including two future benefactors of the school—Edmund F. Slafter and Gilbert E. Hood. Two "ladies" were taking Latin, perhaps the earliest in the school to do so. One of them was "N. Jane M. Fitch" who, although she is but eleven, is thus fitting herself to become the mother of an eminent son. (See Chapter 2, note 8.) Coincident with these first Latin ladies was, appropriately, the omission of the "ornamental subjects", which were now replaced by drawing.

IV

Jonas Richards was followed by Eliezer J. Marsh, a graduate of Middlebury, who remained a year and a half. He was one of the early principals who made teaching his life work. He issued two catalogues, the first one for 1838 being the earliest to announce tuitions. English branches were \$3.00, a 50% increase over the original amount under Fitch; Latin and Greek were \$3.50, an advance of 16%; and French and drawing were \$1.00 additional. These increases were probably made to satisfy the demand of the principal for more income. The first allusion to a "public examination" appears, which is to take place at the end of each term, "at which time parents and friends are particularly invited to attend." This had probably been an earlier custom, and was well calculated to emphasize the term or quarter, as a unit. It was sometimes called Quarter Day.

Slafter says of Marsh,

His pupils speak earnestly of his wise and faithful instructions, and the influence he exerted on their character was salutary and permanent.

One of his students wrote sixty years later,

A grand and noble man was Mr. Marsh I can see him even now, showing the Camera with the Village green and the boys at play upon it, thrown upon the walls of the north upper room, while he told us that some day those pictures would be caught and retained. 'Boys', he would say, 'some of you may live to have your pictures taken by a camera'.¹⁴

In Marsh's second catalogue of 1839, seventy-eight out of one hundred and three students are of Thetford; and sixteen are children of trustees, including four Slades, four Lathams, three Kendricks, and two Fitches. The "remarks" seem, to one who is familiar with Judge Short's style, to have been the product of his pen.

Rarely is the influence of a few virtuous, intelligent and enterprising citizens, in a young community appreciated; an influence, which though silent, is ever deepening and widening like a circling wave on the smooth waters With a few such men, in the first settlement of this town, Providence blest this people; most of whom have gone home to their reward. Early they established a Literary Institu-

tion, where their sons and daughters might receive that intellectual and moral culture, which should fit them to wield an important influence in advancing the cause of education and religion The advantages of this Institution, situated in the midst of an intelligent and virtuous community wholly removed from those scenes of dissipation, which too often allure the young from the path of rectitude, are too well known to need a recital.

Mr. Marsh evidently had charge of the school for about eleven terms, when disagreement arose, the cause of which is not apparent, but may have been the matter of income. There is an indication that about 1836 or 1837 some cash was paid to the principals and Marsh had been given the county land rent of \$148, which became a precedent.

The academy had been launched without a fund with which to assure its continuity, and now having neither the tuitions nor the income from the county lands, the trustees had nothing left for repairs and apparatus. Their idea of a fund would necessarily be simple. The only investments possible were loans to individuals, secured by notes, or mortgages on real estate, but apparently they worked out an original plan of their own.

A resolution adopted in January, 1835, is preserved in a little red-covered blank book, and its guarded words give a view of their modest hopes.

Whereas it is expedient to raise by Subscriptions, the sum of Twenty-five hundred Dollars, or more, to constitute a fund to aid the operations of the school by purchasing Philosophical & Chemical apparatus; repairing & keeping in repair the Academy building; and paying instructors when necessary, & the excess, if any there should be arising from the interest of said fund, to be appropriated for the benefit of indigent young men attending said school & preparing for the ministry.

At least \$867 was to be raised in one year, and the remainder in three to five years, with interest after the next September first, to be paid one year hence. The little book shows contributions amounting to slightly less than \$1400, with a few additional names on a later list. The subscriptions indicate roughly the comparative financial status of the contributors, Dr. Kendrick heading the list with \$150, Capt. Latham \$125, for which he

gave his note, and Judge Short \$50, paid at once. They range down to \$5, and Jacob Newcomb, in subscribing \$5, paid the first year's interest of 30 cents, showing the rate to be 6%.

There were twenty items of \$8.34 each, which at first sight is puzzling. But computation shows that 6% interest would be fifty cents, and they all subscribed by note, indicating that the plan was an inducement to subscribers to contribute annually. In other words, it seems that they were to furnish principal and pay interest on it themselves. Judge Buckingham subscribed his \$8.34 for life. It is nowhere revealed whether his principal was finally collected.

The few subscribers from out of town were of Hanover and were largely members of the Dartmouth faculty. President Lord subscribed \$25; the treasurer, Mills Olcott, subscribed \$40; and Professors Haddock, Crosby and Young \$15 each. Others were Professors Shurtleff, Oliver, Mussey, and Hale. The Rev. Henry Wood, pastor of the Hanover church, subscribed \$5, and gave a Bible.

The history of this 1835 fund is not always clear. There were fifty-six contributors and occasionally one paid the principal. Money from some source must have come in at once, as the catalogue for 1835 announces that "An extensive Chemical, Philosophical and Astronomical Apparatus belongs to the Institution." The increasing demand for equipment and teachers was to plague the trustees continually in the future, and there is evidence that collection of interest on the fund was arduous.

V

The next available catalogue, issued by the principal, John E. Stanyan, for 1842, shows some significant changes, one being an indication of courses. There were still four terms, but it was announced that

the time devoted to the classical department will ordinarily be three years. A systematic course of English studies has also been adopted with reference to those who may wish to accomplish a sound education without interruption. It is hoped that the advantages of such an arrangement will be sufficiently obvious to all to produce a general conformity.

For the first time a list of required textbooks and their authors is also given, thus further emphasizing conformity. (See Appendix III)

Three years earlier it had been stated that "Books can be obtained in the village, but it would be well for students to bring such books as they have." Textbooks had not usually been prescribed. In 1823 Samuel Read Hall had warned prospective students in Concord, that "Books used in this school must be uniform." As late as 1879, when urging uniformity, the local superintendent of the Thetford schools wrote, "I have often seen classes in our schools, in which there were as many different kinds of textbooks as scholars."¹⁵

This first list of texts was a typical one of the time and provides the earliest view of the work which the school was doing. It also reveals the breadth of an English course and the narrowness of a classical course. The latter was dependent upon the demands of the colleges. Not only were the classics considered the foundation of a professional education and the basis of culture, but they also provided the severe mental discipline which was considered necessary.

More than a quarter of a century later the eminent preacher, Horace Bushnell, said prophetically,

We agree in common speech to call educated men 'men of letters,' understanding by the term such as have been trained in the literature of the Greek and Latin peoples. For the time was when there was nothing else to begin at and learn from It was letters or nothing. But there was a day of things to come when the discoveries of science, God's own work, will share the place of letters

And they will uncover such new ranges of thought, and such worlds full of meaning, that if the great human teachers, such as Plato and Aristotle, had but caught the sense of them, it is doubtful whether they would have been able to think of anything else.¹⁶

Stanyan's English course slightly suggests a future conception of secondary education as preparation for intelligent living, but still clings to some of the old "stand-bys." Two of the texts were of college grade, and several were ancient. William Paley was an English clergyman whose object had been

to gather materials from the knowledge communicated by science wherewith to construct an argument for the existence and attributes of God.

One of the attributes was “*contrivance*.” His thesis was that having created the earth, God created human beings, animals and plants. He then *contrived* organs to enable them to live upon the earth. He *could* have accomplished this in other ways but he “*chose* to prescribe limits to His own power” Paley ascribes “on the part of the Author of Nature, a studious benevolence”, but admits that “of the origin of evil, no universal solution has been discovered.”

His first edition of *Natural Theology* had been issued in 1802, forty years before the Thetford texts were announced. A copy of an American edition of 1829, which was probably used in Thetford, shows hard usage. It has three hundred pages of text, and is made more intelligible than the early editions by the addition of plates illustrating those “special” organs of human, animal, and plant life. This text would be likely to supply considerable “severe mental discipline.” It was dropped from the Thetford list at some time between 1863 and 1870.

Richard Whately a more recent writer, was an English clergyman and scholar who became Archbishop of Ireland. His *Logic* was first published in 1826. Both Paley and Whately were used in Dartmouth for many years.

William Smellie, a Scotchman, published his *Philosophy of Natural History* in 1799, forty years before the publication of the Thetford text list. The term philosophy had originally been used in the sense of the love, or pursuit, of knowledge, but gradually came to signify the principles or knowledge of a given subject.

Isaac Watts’ *Improvement of the Mind*, known familiarly as Watts on the Mind, was the most ancient of the English text-books, his first edition having been issued a century earlier in England. Watts had long been a household name because of his hymns and poems for children.

Adrien Legendre, born ninety years earlier, in 1752, was a famous French mathematician who did original work in developing the science. Translation and adapta-

tion of his books was done by Charles Davies, professor of Mathematics in the American Columbia University, who also edited other works and wrote texts of his own.

The American Francis Wayland, a clergyman, was the contemporary president of Brown University and a prolific writer on both religious and economic subjects. In contemplating the increase of machines, "generally driven by steam", he expressed his conviction that

God is thus lifting off from us that oppressive severity of toil which paralyzes intellect and benumbs the power of emotion.¹⁷

Reviews of certain of his text books have a controversial note of satisfaction, declaring that they will be gladly adopted by those who have been dissatisfied with Paley.

A contemporary text was *The Geography of the Heavens* by Elijah H. Burritt, first published in 1833, and is notable not only for comprehensiveness, but also for its early fore-shadowing of later pedagogy. In the preface to the first and second editions, used in Thetford, he is critical of earlier astronomy texts, which largely limited illustration to maps and globes, and he writes,

I came at length to the conclusion that any description of the stars, to be practically useful, must be made from a careful observation of the stars themselves.

On a more contemporary level, he adds that

a serious contemplation of those stupendous works of the Most High, which astronomy unfolds, is calculated above all other departments of human knowledge, to enlarge and invigorate the powers of religious contemplation and subserve the interests of rational piety.

The heavens were not yet hidden by the great elms of the Hill village when this text was used, and a vivid imagination is hardly necessary to realize the popularity of the subject.

This book played a part in the life-story of Sherburne Burnham, probably the most remarkable man that the town of Thetford has produced. He was one of the great astronomers of his time, and accounts of his life repeat that his career began with the accidental purchase of a copy of the book in New Orleans several

years after he left Thetford. But Sherburne Burnham had been a student in the academy in 1855, '56, and '57, under principals Orcutt and Hood, and the text was used in the school during those years. It is reasonable to suppose that his interest was first aroused in Thetford.

John Stanyan was graduated from Dartmouth in 1840 and had come directly to Thetford. Simeon Short and Edmund Slafter were his assistants at some time, and there was a preceptress and a music teacher. The Hopkins house now served as a dormitory and as heretofore, most of the families took in students. Board was advertised as \$1.25 a week, "exclusive of lights and washing." "A few pious, indigent young men can have their tuition paid from the funds of the Institution." These funds were supplemented as needed, from the church, with the \$6.00 interest from the Mrs. Burton bequest.

Music had not been mentioned in a catalogue before, and the form in which it is now offered is uncertain. As the teacher is a woman,¹⁸ an instrument was probably indicated as it was not yet time for a woman to wave a baton and teach in the manner of the old singing schools. It was early for a piano, but there were smaller keyboard instruments, and if one was used it was owned privately, and probably was housed in a private home.

There must have been some musical activity long before this time. Slafter says that Cyrus Baldwin, the preceptor of three years earlier, was "an accomplished teacher of music", by which he undoubtedly meant the singing-school type. Elijah Babcock, the pastor of the Hill church, coming to Thetford in 1831, is known to have taught music in the school; and Dr. Burton, with his devotion to it, would surely have made efforts to include it in the early school activities.

In the '20s and '30s there had been a general awakening of interest in music, especially in Boston, where Lowell Mason was introducing more and better music in the churches, and after much opposition had succeeded in including it in the curriculums of the public schools. Echoes of his work appeared in Thetford and the vicinity occasionally, and one young woman of the town, Harriet

Hosford, was studying with him in Boston as the 1842 catalogue was issued. Later she was a leading figure among the music lovers of Thetford and taught for a time in the academy.

Music had been a student activity in Dartmouth from its early days. In 1807 the Handel Society was organized and soon found it desirable to add female voices. Dr. Burton's daughter, Thomas Hopkins' daughter, and a niece of Judge Buckingham, who lived with him for a few years, sang with the society at different times. They were probably attending a private school in Hanover.

Programs show that the best classical choruses were sung, and records indicate that members were thoroughly drilled in music theory. Charles White, and Isaac Hosford, brother of Harriet, were members, and Otis Hovey was at one time secretary and treasurer.¹⁹ Several of the principals had also been members. It is likely that Thetford would feel in some degree the influence of the musical atmosphere in Hanover.

VI

As the fortunes of the school have been followed for its first two decades, certain milestones have been briefly noted—the expansion of the curriculum, especially the addition of more science and history, the training of teachers, more music, drawing trustees from a widening area, including the nearby college, and lastly the imperative need of money. The school was still permeated with a strong religious atmosphere, attending two services on Sunday, and prayers morning and evening. A Sabbath School, then a new idea, had been organized by the church, and the church was also making much of music, holding singing schools and paying for the instruction. Minor church trials were frequent, but this was a normal condition.

Changes had taken place in the village. Joseph Reed had removed to Montpelier where he was to continue his prosperity and public service, and was to be a trustee of Montpelier Academy for twenty-four years. One of his sons, who had been an early student in Thetford,

became a librarian of the Vermont State Library which has been an important source of material for this history. Charles White had left the town, feeling that he could not stay for the salary which the church offered, and the Rev. Elijah Babcock had succeeded him. Mr. Babcock was active in the school and his children were to add to its reputation, especially through his son Henry, who became a nationally known botanist.

Dr. Burton had died in 1836, after several years of feebleness. (See Appendix VII, lines 14, 15.) He had tried desperately to keep the newer denominations from entering the town, feeling that they were "in error". But he lost control, and among the ardent Methodists was Lyman Fitch, who was active in establishing the denomination in another part of the town. Colonel Fitch was probably one of the incorporators of the denominational seminary at Newbury, Vermont, which contained the germ of Boston University. He had removed to Lyme to live with his son, and died there soon after the period we have been considering.

Judge Buckingham had died in 1841 at the age of 83. He had been "a gentleman of the old school", a benevolent aristocrat. He had served the town and state in many positions, and apparently had reached a point where his fifty cents interest would be all he could contribute to the school he had served so well. Having no children, his last days were made comfortable by his second wife, whom he had married in his old age. "Aunt Meribah", as she was called, was illiterate, but was said to be one of the "brightest" women in the village. Her homely wisdom and quaint sayings lingered for many years.

The Lathams had left the Hill and had gone to their farm two miles away which is still owned by descendants in 1950. Members of this large family kept in touch with the academy and were constantly contributing to its welfare. The Slades had come to the Hill because of the school and were to be connected with it for many years. The Frosts had come for the same reason and were to add substantially to its reputation. Several new houses had been built, including the attractive brick

one at the south end of the street, which Thomas Turner left to migrate to Oberlin. The greatest change had been the removal of the meeting house to a new site in 1830. The state had long before repealed the laws which permitted the support of churches by taxation, and there had been a bitter struggle concerning the use and repairs of the house, which was town property and stood upon public land.

The struggle was further complicated by the coming of new denominations, and rivaled the Loomis trial of fifteen years earlier in dividing the people of the town. The matter was finally settled by selling the meeting house at auction, and the affiliated Congregational "Society" bought it and moved it across the road to a lot purchased of James White. At this time the addition of a tower and a vestibule transformed it from an eighteenth century style to that of 1830. It thus became more "elegant" than the academy building. The town meetings were soon accommodated in a "town house" nearer the center of the town.

The history of the school had largely coincided with a period of "social ferment", expressed by the election of Andrew Jackson, and a struggle was taking place between the privileged and the unprivileged, toward achieving a greater degree of democracy. In Vermont, as in other states, organizations were springing up whose mission it was to compel such reforms as "Abolition of Imprisonment for Debt" and "Equal Universal Education."

Universal education could not come until schools were free to all. The state had been slow with its educational development. Instead, people were spending much of their time and money on the new humanitarian and religious missionary organizations. John Huden has expressed it in a nutshell.

In the welter of Temperance, Revivals, Anti-Slavery, Railroads, Canals, Wheat-midges, Sheep, Anti-Masonry, and Emigration, Vermont's public school system barely held its own.²⁰

Thetford had been involved in most of these controversial situations. The temperance question had pro-

duced discord, revivals crowded out everything else when they were taking place, slavery was becoming a matter of great concern, and anti-Masonry had nearly divided the church. The population was also affected by emigration to the new mill towns and to the opening West.

Rigid economy had been practiced throughout the countryside. This attitude had persisted since the days when little money was in circulation, and if a man was able to obtain a small amount, he kept it carefully laid away or loaned it to less prosperous neighbors. Shrewdness was a mark of intelligence and even some of the good founders of the academy had sent fellow townsmen to jail for small debts. Public opinion had brought an end to that injustice in 1838, but it was difficult for men to grasp the idea that a laborer was worthy of his hire, and the officers of the town, the church, and the school had strictly clung to their "Calvinist thrift."

However, by 1840 small business concerns were increasing in Thetford. With a population of 2065, five hundred and forty-four men were farmers, and eighty-five were engaged in some form of trade or manufacturing. The standard of living was rising, better homes, better schools, and better roads were coming by compulsion, and a more liberal attitude in financial matters would slowly come in the same way.

John Stanyan, the principal with whom this period ends, had been "scholarly and successful", and in 1842 there were one hundred and one different students. The presence of lawyers on the Hill seems to have influenced young men to choose law as a profession, and both Judge Short and Judge Buckingham frequently had students who "read law" with them. Mr. Stanyan was reading with Judge Short, and Slafter says that "becoming interested in legal studies, the school held a secondary place in his thoughts, and suffered accordingly." Unhappily, in 1843 it had entered one of the periods of depression which menaced its existence with a degree of regularity throughout its first century. Fortunately this period was to be a short one.

CHAPTER 3—REFERENCES

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- ⁴Especially distinguished were his son Dr. Arthur L. Perry, professor of Political Economy in Williams College; and Dr. Perry's sons, Dr. Bliss Perry, professor of English Literature in Williams, Princeton and Harvard, and Dr. Lewis Perry, head master of Phillips Exeter Academy.
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- ⁷Fletcher, Robert Samuel, *A History of Oberlin College*, 2 vols.
- ⁸Ibid., p. 95.
- ⁹*Vermont Chronicle*, May 9, 1834.
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- ¹¹Fletcher, op. cit., pp. 99-100.
- ¹²Frederick Richardson Lord, and Samuel Augustus Lord.
- ¹³Dartmouth Alumni Magazine, June 1930; article by Prof. Leon B. Richardson.
- ¹⁴Letter from Roswell H. Smith, 1894.
- ¹⁵Solon G. Smith, Thetford town report for year ending Feb. 1879.
- ¹⁶Address, *The New Education*, 1870, in a collection of articles entitled *Building Eras in Religion*, p. 35.
- ¹⁷*The Education Demanded by the People of the United States*, p. 15.
- ¹⁸Miss E. W. Merrill, an example of the custom of using only the initials of the given name, thus making identification difficult. She was probably Elizabeth W. Merrill of Dracut, Mass., a student teacher.
- ¹⁹Records of the Handel Society, College archives.
- ²⁰Huden, op. cit., p. 48.



Chapter IV

1843 - 1867

I

IN 1843 THE TUITIONS still ranged from three to four dollars. With an average of fifty students for each of the four terms of a year, the income from them would be well over \$600; and with the addition of the land rent the total income would be \$800 or more. But not all principals could attract a total attendance of two hundred, land rent was not always paid promptly, and assistants must be paid out of the income.

The matter of attracting students was important. There were now several other academies within a radius of twenty-five miles, and the strongly intrenched term unit made it possible, and even common practice, for students to change from one school to another during the year for slight reasons. It was the custom for a principal to range through the countryside during the short vacations, visiting the homes of potential students, and presenting the advantages of "schooling", and of his own school, as attractively as he could. His success depended largely upon his personality.

The position also called for other talents. A man must be an effective teacher, a good disciplinarian, and must manage his own affairs well. He must also be able to control the relation of the village people and the students. The lack of any one of these qualities might result in the departure of a principal. But occasionally a man appeared who possessed all of them.

Early in 1843 the school was in a low state. Mr. Stanyan had left and there were but thirty-two students, all from the immediate neighborhood. Judge Short had come to the rescue and was in charge until a new principal could be found.

Doubtless through the medium of Dartmouth, the trustees became interested in Hiram Orcutt of the class of '42. He was then twenty-seven years old, had taught successfully during the winters of his college course, earning a reputation as a disciplinarian, and was in charge of an academy in Hebron, New Hampshire, where he did not intend to stay. In February the Thetford executive committee, Judge Short, Capt. Latham, and Abijah Howard, drove the twenty-five miles to Hebron and engaged Mr. Orcutt to take the Thetford school in April.¹

He later wrote,

On surveying the ground I understood the situation. The old academy building, worth perhaps \$500, was the only property held in trust by the trustees. The school had to be supported by a low rate tuition. The capacity of the village to accommodate students from abroad was limited. But this was not the time to worry about insufficient accommodations; for the school to be accommodated was not in sight. The outlook was not an encouraging one, nor calculated to awaken large expectations or great enthusiasm. But we had come to stay for several years, and I settled down upon the purpose to win success by earnest, persistent toil, if success were possible. I sent out my circulars broadcast.²

One situation confronting him, which had probably led the trustees to search for a man of unusual promise, was the opening of a "select school" in Post Mills, five miles away. This village had become a busy and thriving center for small mill and manufacturing concerns. A brick building had been erected which was more attractive than the one on the Hill, and the 1840 census calls the institution an academy. In the fall term of 1842 it had thirty students. But Orcutt had 104 and he said that "as the term progressed, the flood-tide seemed to be running my way. . . . and most of the students entered my school when next it opened."³

A less energetic man might have hesitated to meet the challenge which the whole situation presented, and his reasons for accepting it can only be surmised. He probably knew something of the community and the school through his college mates, several of whom were

from Thetford, including a son of Dr. Kendrick. The board of trustees was substantial at the time. Kendrick, Short and Bartholomew were still active, Captain Latham had been elected shortly before, and also a new clergyman, the Rev. Erdix Tenney, who was a successor of Baxter Perry at Lyme and a son-in-law of Dr. Kendrick. Another new member was Morrill J. Walker, a prosperous merchant of Union Village. The president was Dr. Burton's successor, the Rev. Elijah Babcock, a capable and decisive man.

Such a group would be likely to make a favourable impression on the young Orcutt. His statement that he had "come to stay for several years" suggests that they may have offered him some inducement or guarantee. On the Sabbath before the opening of the school he occupied the pulpit, and prospective students gauged him as "competent for the job."⁴

His first catalogue was a modest one. Besides himself and Mrs. Orcutt, there was but one other teacher, whose subjects were music, drawing, and painting. He revived the Teachers Department, offering a course twice a year, the object of which was "to raise the standard of the teacher's qualifications." This course expanded, and six years later he said that it "is regarded as one of great interest and importance", and that Roger Howard, County Superintendent of Common Schools, "is giving assistance his long experience as a teacher and ripe wisdom in matters of education, have made his services very valuable."

His second catalogue, for 1844-1845, gives a list of eleven teachers, four of whom were also students. Of the latter, one taught penmanship, and another vocal music, the other two were young women student assistants suggesting the earlier Lancasterian method. Drawing and painting would be taught if there was a demand for them. Penmanship was more than a useful accomplishment and for many years was considered a minor art. It was fashionable to exchange cards on which names were inscribed with free hand flourishes, and ornamental additions. Autograph albums, some of them de luxe,

were also popular, and interesting specimens of both cards and albums survive. Vocal music was offered “*free of charge*”, the italics indicating an innovation. In a later catalogue he extended this plan by making it a “daily exercise in school under the management of the Social Choir”, probably an echo of the Boston experiment.

The teacher of this first “free of charge” music was Charles Latham, son of the Captain. Slafter says that “Thetford had no better singer than Charley Latham.” He will appear again in the history of the school. Latham left for Dartmouth the next year and was followed by Solon G. Smith, who was also a student teacher and who taught music in the academy many years, although not continuously. He and his artist wife, also an ex-academy student, became cultural leaders in the town, especially in the Post Mills area. Elijah Prouty of Newbury, Vt., who had married a granddaughter of Beriah Loomis, taught music in 1854. He was famous in the upper valley as an organizer and leader of Musical Conventions.

Except for expansion, Orcutt’s first two catalogues are much alike. The first one for 1844-1845 names 166 different students; the second for 1845-1846 names 193. The ratio of attendance by terms was typical for many years. In 1844-1845 it was

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| winter | 150 |
| spring | 104 |
| summer | 62 |
| fall | 130 |
| <hr/> | |
| total attendance | 340 |

Boys were needed on their home farms in summer or they worked for wages on other farms. The same situation prevailed with girls in the kitchens. Of the 193 students in his second catalogue, 87 were residents of Thetford and include family groups ranging from two to four children of individual families, indicating that some “common school” subjects would necessarily be given.

Courses and texts throughout Orcutt’s twelve years were substantially like those of Stanyan. To the English

course he added the Bible, and a few new authors of texts appeared. As patronage increased he was able to say that he had "secured a complete division of labor in the different departments", and he had taken under his own care "those pursuing Higher English branches", including Philosophy, Chemistry, Botany, Algebra, and Physiology which he added in the mid-'40s. English language study was still confined to grammar and a rhetorical reader.

Literature, other than the classics, had not yet found a place as a cultural subject in secondary schools, and only slightly in colleges. In Dartmouth at this time a one-term course only was offered under the title of "English Literature and Literary Criticism." American literature had hardly appeared. Most of the writers who were to create it were children when Thetford Academy opened, but now in the '40s it was developing gradually. Yet Thoreau had not begun to write, Hawthorne was still working on *The Scarlet Letter*, Emerson was publishing his essays, and some of Longfellow's best poems had not been written.

In 1847 Orcutt and a college classmate published a small volume called *Class Book of Prose and Poetry*, containing short selections from English and American authors. It was evidently considered principally as a basis for the study of grammar. They subjected their first edition to the criticism of "many of the best teachers in New England", and one fault noted was that the selections were too difficult for general use. This was corrected, and in the third edition they wrote,

It is confidently believed that the exercises will
be found well adapted to all classes of grammarians in our
common schools and academies, and that they afford a
sufficient variety of construction to illustrate all the prin-
ciples and peculiarities of the English language.

Of 82 selections of poetry, about two-thirds were from English writers, and of the 14 prose selections about one-half were English. Many were from Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Milton, Coleridge, and Young. American selections were largely from Webster, Edward Everett,

R. H. Dana, Longfellow and Bryant. Only short poems were given entire, including "Thanatopsis."

In the 1850s this little book was used in Kimball Union and Phillips Andover Academies, and in New York and Massachusetts Normal Schools. Roger Howard, who was then principal of the Newburyport Putnam Free School, wrote that "the whole work reflects great credit on the taste, skill and judgment of the compilers."⁵ It had a circulation of about fifty thousand copies,⁶ testifying to the need of such a work, and was used in Thetford for at least twenty-five years. The price of the book was seventeen cents.

Orcutt gradually acquired scientific apparatus which he evidently paid for himself. In 1847 his catalogue announced that

The principal has recently purchased a valuable Telescope, which will be freely used for the benefit of the students. The instrument is 6½ feet long; has 5 astronomical eye-pieces, of the magnifying power of 46, 82, 300 and 400, and a colored glass for viewing the sun, with a terrestrial eye-piece of the power of 46.

By 1852 he had added

a Magneto-Electric Machine, Microscope, Magic Lantern, Kaleidoscope, Surveyor's Compass, and three sets of Maps, which will be freely used for the benefit of the students.

Experience led him in 1850 to emphasize preparation.

. . . . special attention is given to the elementary
. . . . Reading, Spelling, Writing and Arithmetic. It is believed that first principles are too much neglected in our High Schools and Academies.

He urged promising young men to prepare for college, but does not refer to college for young women, such privileges not then being open to them. However, in his second catalogue, issued in 1844, thirty seven of them were taking classical subjects. French was offered, and soon was taught by a native of France, who also, on occasion, taught Spanish and Italian.

Orcutt's predecessor had organized courses, and Orcutt went a step further and organized "regular classes for graduation both classical and English." His first cata-

logues indicate only the names of those who have "left for college", but his fifth catalogue names 16 men as "graduating" in July 1848. No program of exercises has been found, but the next year's class of 1849 had a simple two-leaf program for 14 men. The exercises, held in the church, began at one o'clock in the afternoon, and consisted of orations, interspersed with unnamed musical numbers. Kerosene had not appeared and evening exercises would not be feasible because of the lack of lighting facilities. Imagination can easily picture the excitement and pleasure of both students and audience in those earliest "Anniversary Exercises." The word "commencement" was not used for many years.

The men in that first graduating class of 1848 were typical of the classes of the next fifteen years. They included Arthur Latham Perry, son of Baxter Perry, an early trustee, who was for many years Professor of Political Economy in Williams College; Charles E. Hovey of Thetford, General in the Civil War, educator, and a founder of the first Normal School in Illinois; Carlton P. Frost, Dean of the faculty of the Dartmouth Medical School, one-time trustee of the college, and beloved physician of the locality; and George W. Gardner, clergyman and educator, president of Central University of Iowa, and later principal of the New London, N. H. Literary and Scientific Institute. Of the sixteen men, eleven went to Dartmouth.

There were 302 different students in school during this year, and the catalogue shows the names of men who, later, were as distinguished as those named above. But more unusual for the time, of 129 young women, fifty-two were taking some classical subjects. It will occasion no surprise to learn that many marriages took place later. The school had always been the scene of "matches", one good deacon remarking that if they were made in heaven, then Thetford Hill was a very heavenly place. Now it was a clearing house for marriages between young people with approximately the same education, but from widely separated localities.

A member of the next class, that of 1849, was Calvin B. Hulbert, (Dartmouth, A.B., P.B.K. and D.D.), who eventually became a trustee, and later the president of Middlebury College. Among his publications is an address especially devoted to his conception of an academy which is valuable as an aid in visualizing those of the mid-nineteenth century.⁷

To him, academies were needed in the interests of religion.

The crying demand of the State is for institutions so thoroughly Christian, that for young people to enter them would be to awaken the expectation of their being redeemed and saved, if they were not before they came.

Academies were needed to prepare students for college, and therefore it was obvious that their character and standard of scholarship would be fixed by the college. They were also needed

as the means of calling out from among our hills and valleys, and from the bosoms of our communities, multitudes of young men and women who otherwise would waste their lives in ignorant obscurity.

He could not, of course, foresee the crowded public high schools of the future, the changes in college preparatory subjects, nor the waning of religious exercises in the schools.

In 1852, with 400 different students during the year, the following table shows the geographical distribution:

| | | | | | |
|---------------|-----|--------------|----|--------|---|
| Vermont | 175 | New York | 15 | Maine | 5 |
| Massachusetts | 100 | Connecticut | 11 | Texas | 4 |
| New Hampshire | 74 | Rhode Island | 7 | Canada | 3 |

and one each from Maryland, Indiana, the District of Columbia, Nova Scotia, and Syria.

The coming of the railroad in 1847 had encouraged the widespread patronage, aided by the half fares which Orcutt was able to secure for students. He was also a thorough advertiser, keeping the school before his correspondents by his stationery, and by announcements. He issued a catalogue in every year of his incumbency, which, after the earliest ones, carried a long list of references, including the faculty and officers of Dartmouth, and business men in the cities.

The earliest girls known to have formally graduated were from the English course in the class of 1852. They were Elisabeth H. Bates of Hartland, Vermont, Annie H. Burnham of Dunbarton, New Hampshire, Eliza P. Hood of Chelsea, Vermont, and Lucy A. Marsh of Marshfield, Vermont. There were eighteen young men in this class, of whom ten entered Dartmouth.

Three years later, in 1855, the girls outnumbered the boys in the graduating class, fifteen to ten. The program had now become more pretentious, following a college model. The exercises began at "six and one-half o'clock precisely", with music by the Bradford, Vt. Brass Band, a Latin and a Greek oration, a colloquy in English, French, Italian, and Latin, by five girls, a poem and a valedictory. Each of the twenty-five had a part, the boys delivering orations and the girls reading compositions.

There is a tendency to judge the work of the school by the number of men it had prepared for college, but it provided a remarkably broad general education. In social usefulness there was little difference between those who did and those who did not go to college. College degrees enhanced social standing, and certain professions increasingly demanded them. But some gifted individuals surmounted the lack of college training. An outstanding example was the astronomer, Sherburne Burnham of Thetford, whose formal education consisted of a few terms in the English department of the Academy. There were successful lawyers and doctors who omitted college. There were engineers and surveyors who played a part in the development of western railroads.

There were also successful men who entered college but were not able to complete the four years. Edward Conant was one of these, leaving Dartmouth when little more than half way through the course. Because of his proven ability as a teacher and administrator, he was chosen to be the first principal of the Orange County Grammar School at Randolph, Vermont, in 1861. After six years this school became the first State Normal School, largely through his efforts. He remained there

until 1874, when he became State Superintendent of Education. Both Middlebury and the University of Vermont bestowed the degree of Master of Arts upon him. His school history of Vermont was a standard text book for many years.

The increasing freedom of women also made it possible for them to have careers as teachers, many of them going to the young cities and towns of the West. There were expert teachers of the deaf and dumb, teachers in the schools for Negroes in the South, and foreign missionaries. There were no home-making courses, but certainly those young women who married and had families, were more intelligent wives and mothers, and contributed more to social life, because of their years at Thetford Academy.

Much was still being published in papers and reviews concerning the education of women. Thetford people had known of a significant event, when among the three to receive "the first bona fide college degrees ever granted to women"⁸ was Mary Hosford, Thetford born, who, with her parents, had been among the pioneers of Oberlin. Because of her alphabetical position she happened to be the first of the three to receive a diploma in 1841.⁹ The young ladies, however, were not allowed to take part in the graduating exercises, their papers being read for them by a male instructor.¹⁰

Oberlin had taken a bold step, after being divided on the question, and a statement by the founder says,

We knew that female education was grievously neglected and too generally of such a character as to fit its subject better for a place at the toilet with the pretty trinkets which were the fruits of their education, than to qualify them for happy and useful companionship in life; and as there was not a female Collegiate Institution in the United States, we felt that there was yet unoccupied in the shades of Academus, a wide area.¹¹

In a letter, Mary Hosford speaks of trials, perplexities and discouragements in her first college year, and

. . . . the sophomore year was hardly less difficult
. . . . Often do I look back at the time when so many stood out against the course we were pursuing. But the last two years were fraught with comfort and pleasure.¹²

The fact and circumstances of her feat must have been well known in Thetford, where there were many family connections. It could not fail to impress ambitious girls, but since Mary Hosford's home was in Oberlin, the seat of the college, her expenses would be small. Almost three decades were to pass before there were other "Collegiate Institutions" open to women.

However, in 1849 a Vermont paper said in the grandiloquent style of the day,

. . . . it is indeed a glorious thought, that the mind of woman can now expand and beautify in the light of science and literature, untrammelled by the claims of ignorance and prejudice which have fettered her spirit in days of yore.¹³

Young women were now considered as especially adapted "to become the instructor of the rising generation from the peculiar character of their minds."¹⁴

This decade of the '40s was especially significant in the struggle for more privileges and greater freedom for women. Although the subject had been agitated for twenty years, the first general convention for arousing public opinion was held in 1848 amid derision and disapproval.¹⁵ Education for women had been an entering wedge, but it had worked slowly, and Thetford Academy was "modern" when it allowed young women to appear on a public platform and read compositions. Women had few rights and could not even control their own property if they married. Asa Burton had been generous when he allowed his wife to dispose of hers as she wished. The idea of suffrage was still a wild dream, which was not to be realized during the academy's first century.

II

In December of Orcutt's first year, 1843, fire destroyed the Latham & Kendrick store, and the house south of it, which had been the last home of Asa Burton, and the records of the secretary of the trustees were burned with the store. For some reason no record appears until almost a year later, for the annual meeting of November 1844. It had evidently been the custom to consider the principal as a trustee ex officio, and Orcutt

was now on the committee to compile a new "Code of Laws."

In this code an executive committee had large powers and many duties. All students were still required to attend public worship on the Sabbath, morning and evening prayers in the school, and a Biblical exercise on Monday morning. In his later catalogues Orcutt adds that the aim of these exercises is to

inculcate the great principles of morality and religion; not to teach a sectarian creed, but the fundamental doctrines of the Bible, which contemplate man as a sinful and immortal being, and God as rightfully claiming his love and obedience.

No student was to be absent from any recitation nor leave the town without special permission of the principal, nor visit any grocery or tavern for purposes of amusement or dissipation.

These laws probably were a reflection of those of past years, and disclose conditions which offered temptations to lively boys. The tavern, with a license to sell alcoholic beverages, presented a problem if the tavern keeper sold liquor to students. At least once in Orcutt's time there was trouble, and he promptly brought the offending tavern keeper to court.

Sports and athletics were unknown, there was little to occupy the active young people out of school hours, and in a closely settled village mischief was sure to take place. A student diarist of 1850¹⁶ writes often of a walk, and once of swimming in the river. He also mentions playing ball, but the game of baseball, as it is played in the twentieth century, did not exist. Pitching was underhand, a catcher had no protection, gloves were not worn, and there were no umpires, inning, nor match games. The writer shows plainly by his depression and restlessness that time hung heavily on his hands.

But if there was little outlet for their active bodies, their minds were evidently kept alert. Various societies were organized; a United Fraternity, a Total Abstinence Society, a Social Choir, Social Friends (a literary society), a T. G. G. (?) "for those less accustomed to speaking in public", and a Theological Society.

Debates were popular, and subjects reveal the maturity of the students and their interest in educational and political problems of the day:

Is the knowledge of the Greek and Latin Languages requisite for an accomplished education?

Resolved, that women should be permitted to have equal privileges with men, political and social.

Resolved, that Northern States should secede from the Southern.

Resolved, that every man should strive to bring the world into one government, and to bring all to speak the same language.

These debates, and preparation for them, doubtless contributed to the success of those who entered the professions.

A public examination at the close of each term was followed by an evening of declamations, with such subjects as

The Grave of Hamilton
Truth Triumphant
Every man makes his own Statue

ending with an original play. A student letter in 1855 said,

We have a Liberian here . . . which beats all the boys on speaking, he is as smart a fellow as I ever saw. He is going through College and then going back to Africa.¹⁷

There was a periodical, *The Experiment*, which perhaps was short lived, as but two numbers have been found. That Hiram Orcutt was appreciated may be inferred by a quotation from a chronicle in one of the numbers.

Then they searched through the length and breadth of the land, and found one of the sons of the prophets, Hiram by name.

Now when they looked upon him, they were greatly pleased, for he was of goodly countenance, and higher from the shoulders and upward than any of the people.

And in process of time there were gathered together very many of the youth and maidens from the surrounding nations to be taught by him;

For his fame spread abroad, and the man waxed mighty. Therefore the elders assembled together, and spake among themselves after this wise, saying,

Have ye considered this man, that there is none like him in all the land?

Come, therefore, let us make a league with him, that he may remain with us forever.¹⁸

A more tangible expression of regard for him was made in 1849, when his portrait was presented to the school. Fifty-nine young men (but no young women) had contributed to the cost, and the trustees were so impressed that the names of the donors were inscribed in the secretary's records. At the same time they also presented a portrait of Judge Short. The paintings are not signed but the artist is known to have been Albion K. P. Floyd who was preparing for college and also teaching drawing and oil painting in the school.¹⁹

In his "Reminiscences" Orcutt stressed the fact that his aim had been to allow the students of both sexes to mingle socially under proper regulations and restraints, and that this procedure was in contrast to certain other schools which did not allow such mingling and where there was "constant irritation and law-breaking." He boasted that "no case of gross impropriety ever occurred" in the school when he was principal.²⁰

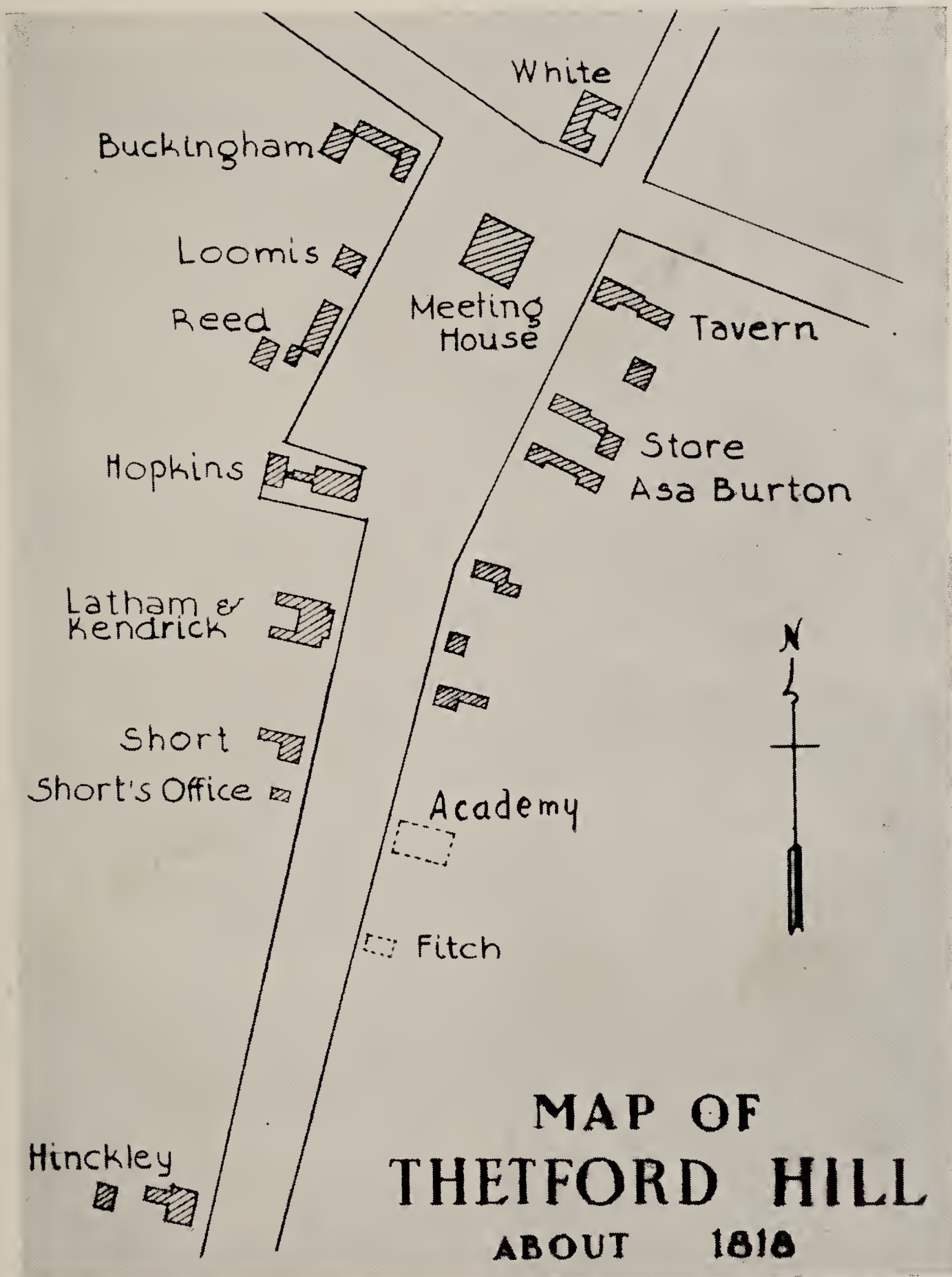
One of his strong points was the ability to attract capable assistants. During his twelve years in Thetford forty-eight young men and women were associated with him, most of whom made a deep impression on the school by their personalities, as well as by their skill in teaching. After his second year he had male assistant principals, and some of these later became principals. Not only were "matches" contracted between students, as already noted, but the same result followed the association of men and women assistants, and occasionally of assistants and students.

Mrs. Orcutt was his first preceptress. Another was Eliza Dubois, who later married Dr. Carlton P. Frost of the class of 1848, and became the mother of a member of the Dartmouth medical faculty, and an eminent astronomer. One who was long remembered was a niece of Mrs. Short, Mary Elizabeth Denny, known as "Lizzie", who was connected with the school for seven years. Later she joined the Choctaw mission, with headquarters at Rochester, Minnesota, where the remainder of her life was passed. Of the trustees, Orcutt wrote,

I recall with deep interest the board of trustees who served in that office during my administration. They were able, wise, and public-spirited men, always ready to sustain and aid their principal every way in their power.²¹

CHAPTER 4—REFERENCES

- ¹Orcutt, Hiram, *Reminiscences of School Life*, p. 84.
²*Ibid.*, p. 87.
³*Ibid.*, p. 88.
⁴Slafter, p. 35. Mr. Slafter was evidently present.
⁵Credentials in the third edition.
⁶Orcutt, *op. cit.*, p. 189.
⁷*The Academy: Demands for it, and the Conditions for its Success*, 1877.
⁸Fletcher, Robert Samuel, *A History of Oberlin College*, 2 vols., p. 380.
⁹Hosford, Henry Hallock, *Horsford-Hosford Families in The United States of America*, p. 103.
¹⁰Fletcher, *op. cit.*, p. 835.
¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 380.
¹²*Ibid.*
¹³*Aurora of the Valley*, March 17, 1849.
¹⁴*Ibid.*, Dec. 9, 1848, report of an address on education by William Slade, ex-governor of Vermont.
¹⁵The first woman's suffrage convention for the purpose of arousing public opinion took place on July 19, 1848, at Seneca Falls, New York.
¹⁶Diary of Chauncey Nye, 1850, 1851.
¹⁷Letter from Henry Townsend, 1853.
¹⁸No. 1, for the Fall Term, 1851. See Appendix 7 for the complete Chronicle.
¹⁹Catalogue of 1848-1849; also papers of the class of 1854, Dartmouth College. Floyd was born in Winthrop, Me., in 1823 and died in 1865 by accident at Niagara Falls.
²⁰Orcutt, *op. cit.*, pp. 108, 109.
²¹*Ibid.*, p. 85.



An adaptation by Archer E. Hudson from a map made about 1855





REV. ASA BURTON, D.D.
Founder, first president of the
trustees.
From an oil portrait.



JUDGE SIMEON SHORT
Founder, first secretary of the
trustees.
From an oil portrait.

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|------|
| March 31 st 1818 | Committee of Hartford | |
| | standing to Lyman Fitch & Co | |
| | to one day work falling timber | 1 50 |
| | to one day Do by Daniel Atcomb | 67 |
| | to one day Do by Bela Fitch | 50 |
| April 1 st | to one day hewing timber | 1 50 |
| 1 | and day by Daniel | 67 |
| 1 | and day of Bela | 50 |
| 1 | one day of my oxen & sled | 67 |
| 2 | to 2/3 of day hewing timber | 1 00 |

| | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|------|
| 19 | to one day Do of Daniel | 67 |
| 20 | to one day by Daniel | 67 |
| 20 | to one day by Daniel | 67 |
| May 28 th | to one day hewing | 1 50 |
| 28 | to 1/2 day of Daniel | 34 |
| 28 | to 1/2 day of oxen | 34 |
| 29 | to 1/2 day nailing cap. Stud &c | 75 |

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|------|
| Sept 7 th | to one day finishing the standing | 1 50 |
| 8 | and day Do | 1 50 |
| | | 1 50 |

FRAGMENTS FROM THE FITCH ACCOUNT, 1818.

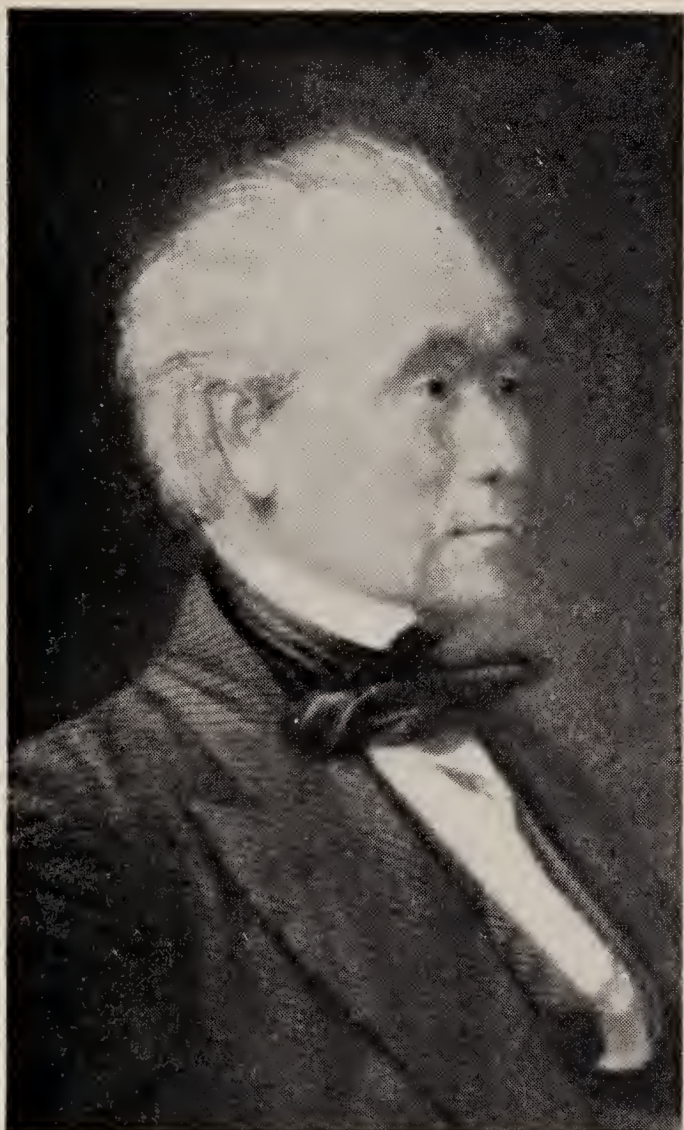


THOMAS HOPKINS
Second treasurer of the trustees.
From a daguerreotype.



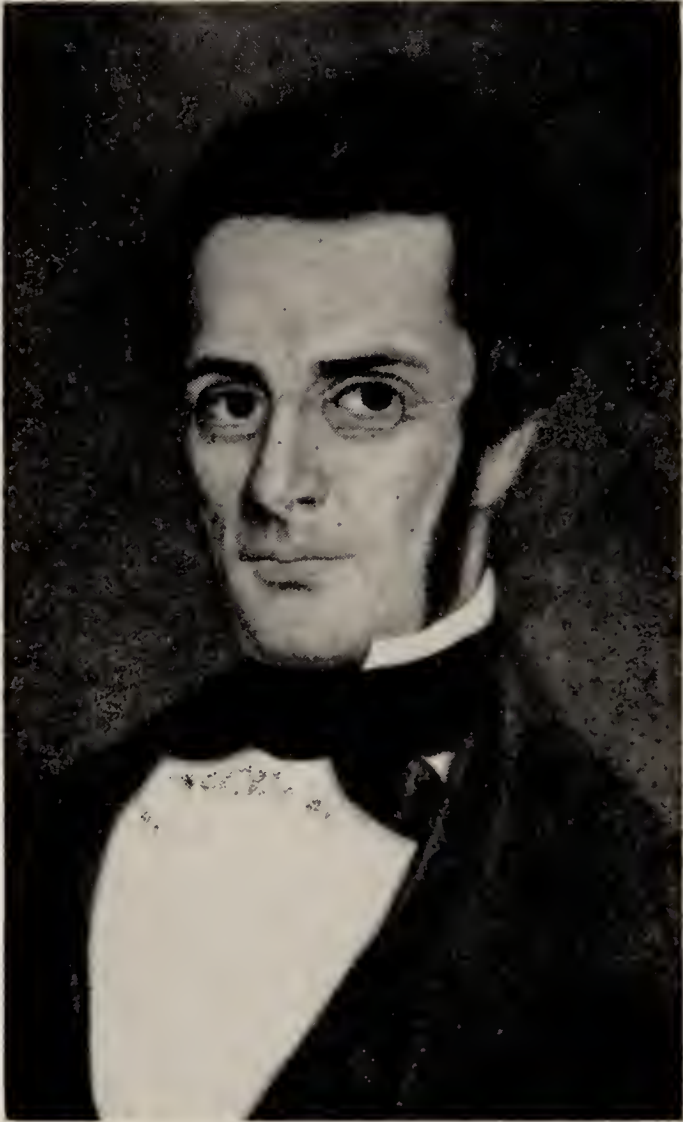
LYDIA (Loomis, Palmer) FITCH
From a daguerreotype.

REV. CHARLES WHITE
Second president of the trustees.
From an engraving.



CAPTAIN WILLIAM HARRIS LATHAM
Early trustee and patron.





HIRAM ORCUTT
From an oil portrait, 1849.



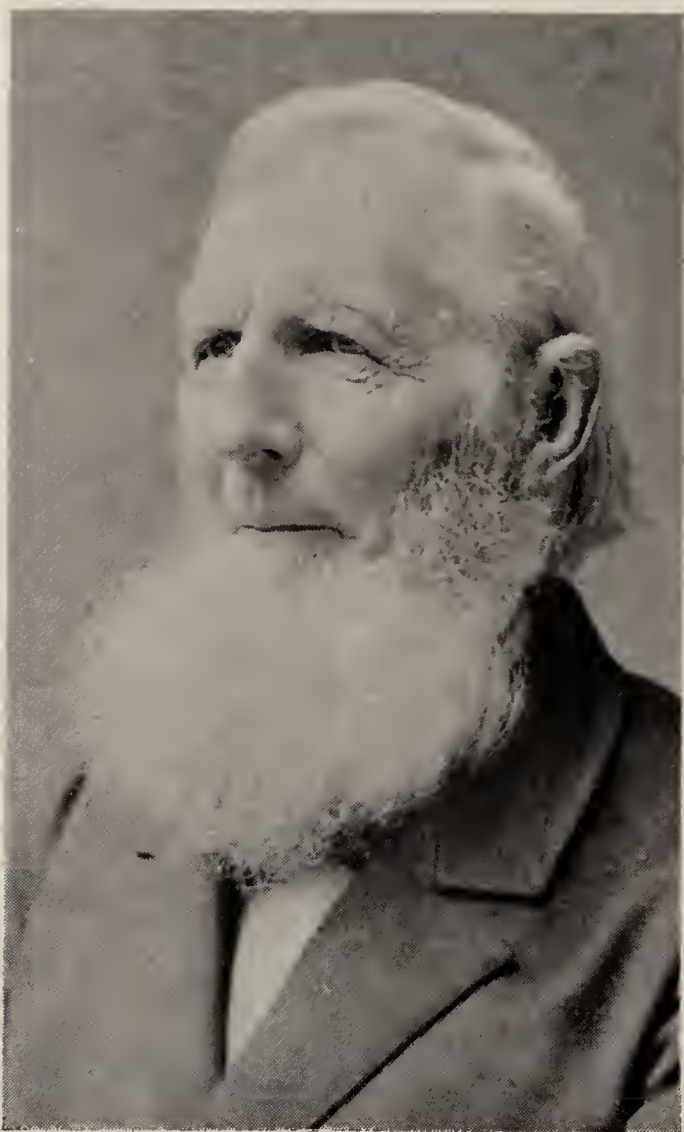
ELIAZBETH (Denny) AINSLIE
Preceptress, 1840s.



BURTON HALL, ACADEMY, BARTHOLOMEW HALL
From an engraving, 1850s.

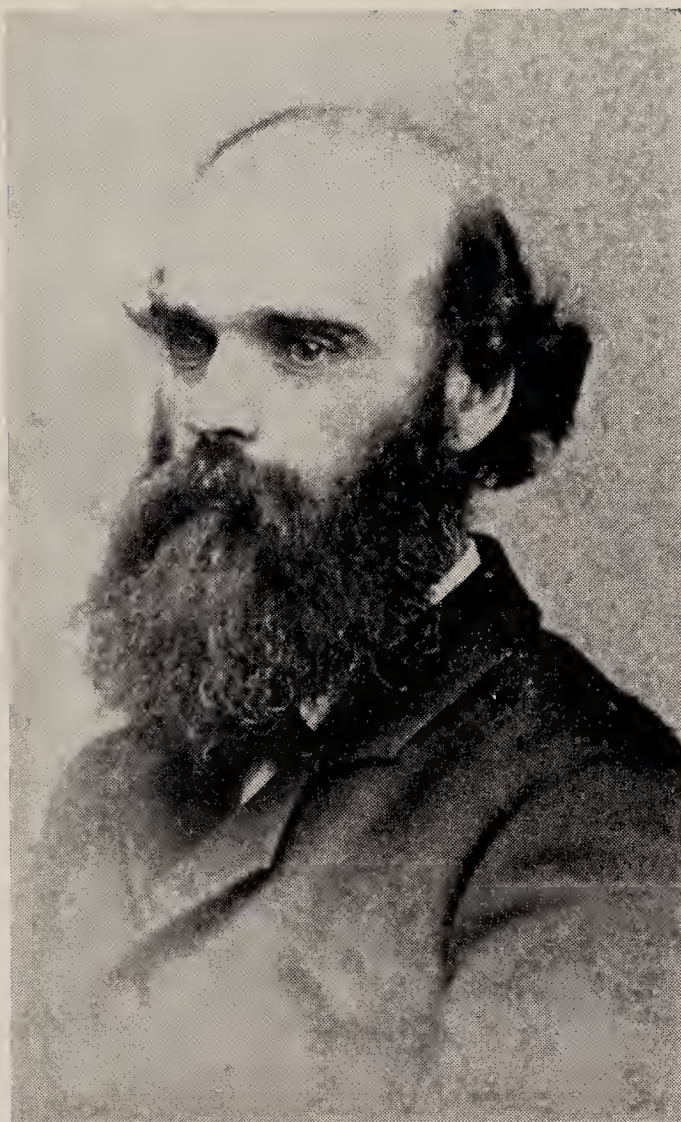


SQUIRE ENOCH SLADE
Longtime treasurer from 1839.



DR. EZRA C. WORCESTER
Teacher, and for many years after
1847, Secretary.

CHARLES LATHAM
Student, music teacher, benefactor,
from 1840s.



SOLON GRAVES SMITH
Student, music teacher, 1840s.

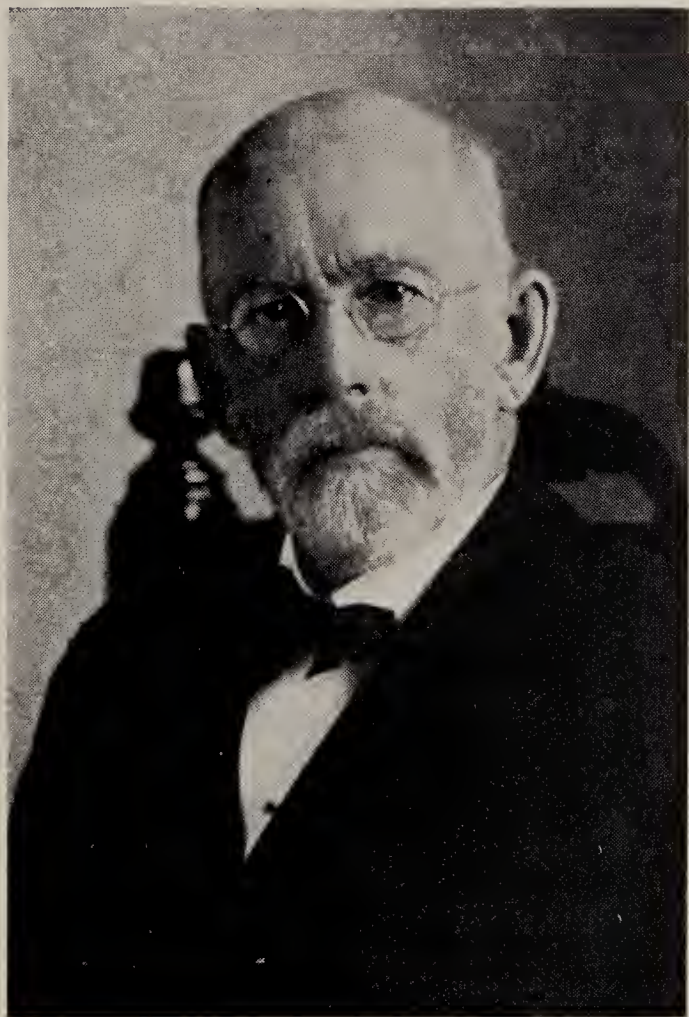




A CLASS OF THE 1860s.
From a daguerreotype.



THE SECOND BURTON HALL
1870-1943



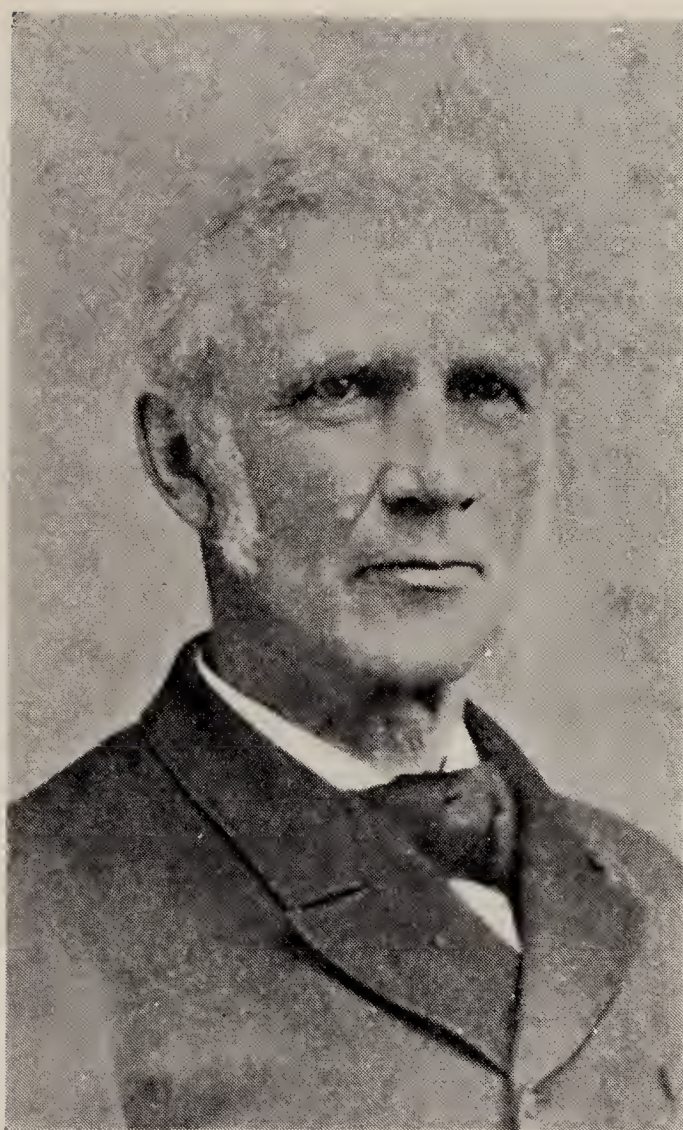
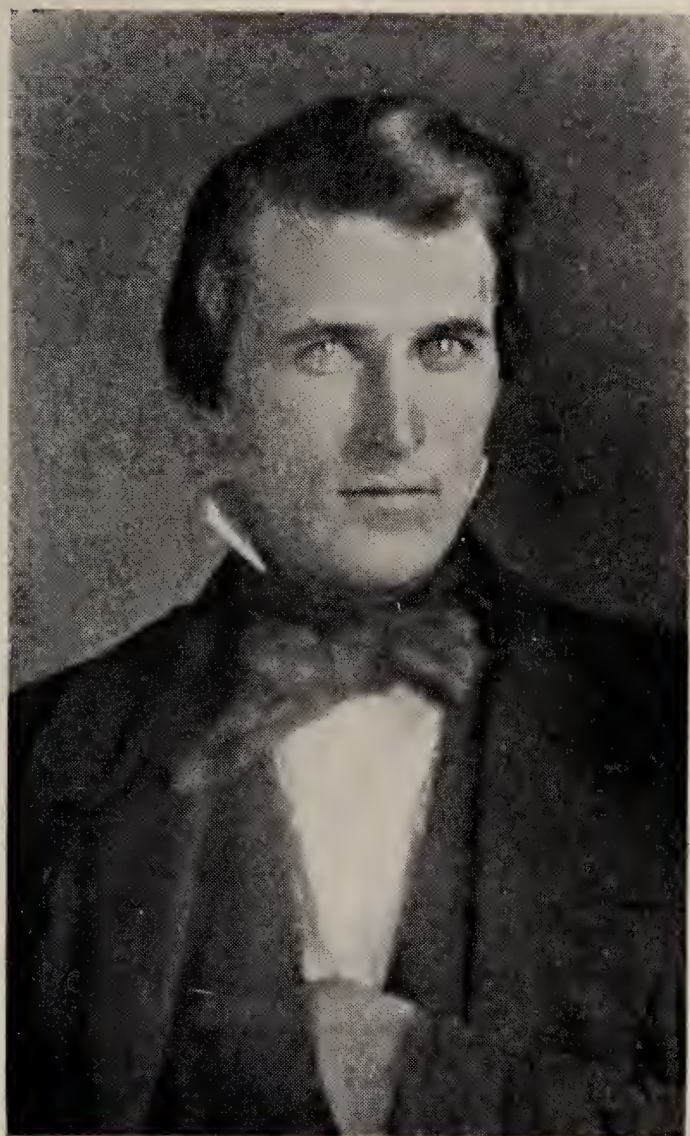
GEORGE S. WORCESTER
Trustee, member of Executive Committee for many years from 1886.



ETTA (MORSE) HESCOCK
Preceptress 1883-1888



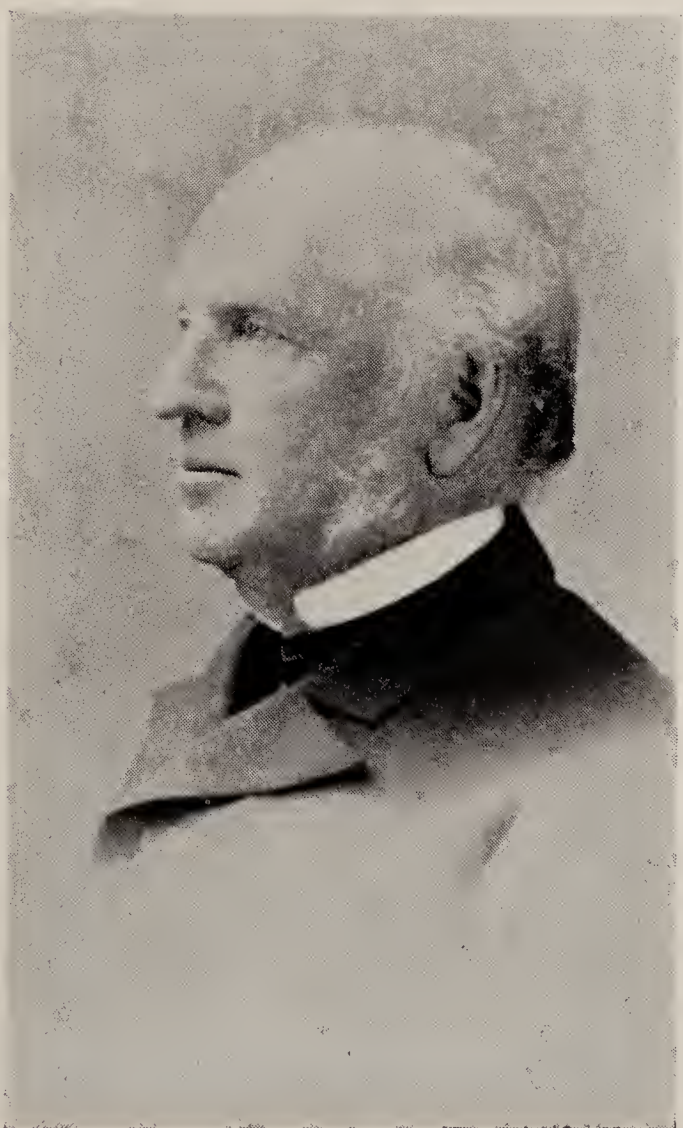
CLASS OF 1888, TIETFORD ACADEMY



WILLIAM SLADE
(Above, left)
 Trustee, treasurer, 1863-1877.

GILBERT E. HOOD
(Above, right)
 Student, principal, benefactor.

REV. EDMUND F. SLAFTER
(At right)
 Student, trustee, benefactor.

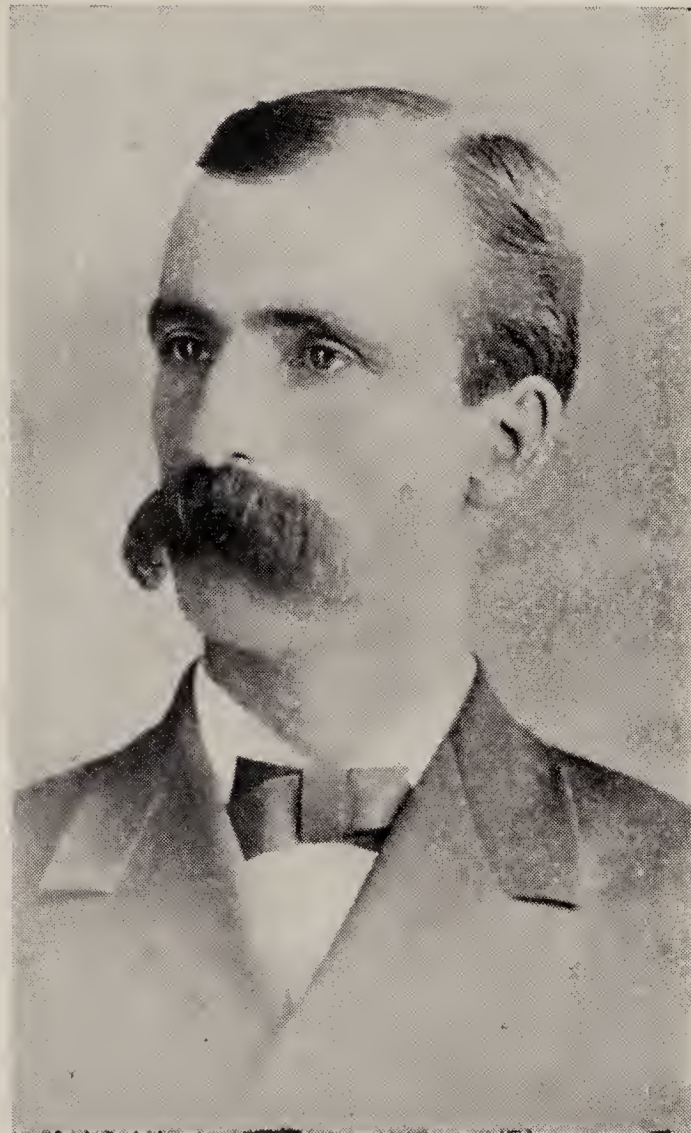




FIRST ORGANIZED FOOTBALL TEAM, 1900.
Coach Leroy Andrews at the right.

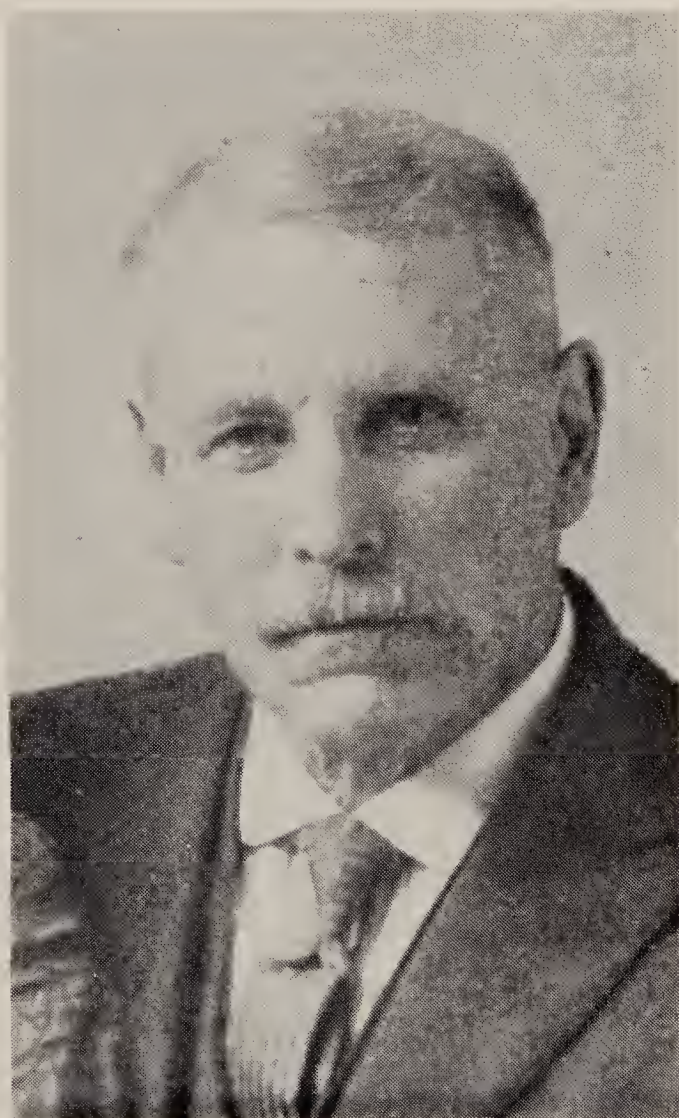


LUMAN R. BOWDISH
(Above, left)
 Principal, 1899-1907.



PROF. THOMAS W. D. WORTHEN
(Above, right)
 Student and trustee.

REV. WILLIAM SLADE
(At right)
 Principal and trustee.





The Common

Slafter Hall

THETFORD HILL VILLAGE ABOUT 1900.



Chapter V

1843 - 1867, Continued

I

AS MIGHT BE EXPECTED from Mr. Orcutt's first impressions of the school plant, steps were soon taken to provide quarters for the students. In the fall term of 1844 there had been an attendance of 143. Orcutt reported that the village was literally packed. The catalogue of 1845-1846 gives the location of each student and it is evident that every house was sheltering them. The school had brought a new source of income to the village. Some of the students did "chores" for their room rent but many paid cash. The Orange Heaton house was then called Heaton Hall and was used for roomers and possibly for boarders. Orange had died and his family had left the town. The next year there was no Heaton Hall, but there were 20 girls at "Mr. Huntington's", which was the Heaton house, and which must have been crowded. The Hopkins house was also serving as a dormitory, and the Orcutts lived there for a while. This house seems to have been greatly enlarged at some time, probably in the first years of Orcutt's reign. These dormitories were all private ventures.

In February 1845, the trustees voted at a special meeting to "erect a building to be rented to students", the whole expense of which, including "situation and erection, shall not excede \$700." The committee for this project consisted of Captain Latham, chairman of the executive committee, Dr. Nathaniel White, the secretary, and Enoch Slade, the treasurer; and the executive committee was to solicit donations. No list of contributors has been found. A site was secured from Abijah Howard, Jr., who owned the land immediately north of the academy building. Howard was a lawyer,

a former student of the academy, and a brother of the Rev. Roger Howard. He had been a trustee about two years.

Work on the building occupied the summer, and the contractor, Johnson T. Muchmore, was paid \$715. In August they were finishing with locks, and had purchased stoves and "funnels" for \$42. Probably some labor and material were contributed, as was usual. The problem of paying the last bills was solved by calling in the "subscription fund", although apparently not all of it was available. There were sixteen rooms,¹ and the cut (See frontispiece) shows but three chimneys, raising the question of how all the rooms were heated. That they *were* heated is evident from a bill for sixteen thimbles. Stoves would then be the "latest fashion" in heating. This drawing must have been made at once, as it appears in the 1845-46 catalogue.

The memory of Asa Burton had survived and this first addition to the original plant of the school was given the name of Burton Hall. It was used as a dormitory for boys, and three years later, four additional rooms were finished off for them in the third story, or attic, of the school building,² and the attractive lunette was replaced by two windows.

The second floor of the school building was originally occupied by two recitation rooms, the assembly hall being on the ground floor.³ A complete change-about took place later and the assembly hall was placed on the second floor. Tradition places this change during Orcutt's day. Within the memory of many at this writing, a large wood-burning stove stood in the center of that second story hall, and a long stove pipe led to a rear chimney. With a stove in each of the two recitation rooms underneath, the fire hazard was great, and with a hundred or more students, the crooked stairways and entrance doors which opened inward would have made escape without injury well nigh impossible. These doors were not rehung until 1925.

The year of 1851 was a busy one on the Hill.⁴ The house, later known as Slafter Hall, was built for Orcutt, and there he evidently boarded the teachers and a few

students. At about the same time a dormitory for girls was built south of the academy building, a mate to Burton Hall, and popularly known as "Mrs. Burton Hall." It was a self-boarding house and a student letter of 1854 says, "They heat the great brick oven and we have a chance to bake." This hall was a private venture of John Lougee, who had come to the Hill in 1847, and was soon elected a trustee and a member of the executive committee.

Mr. Lougee immediately began to buy real estate in different parts of the town. Among other pieces he bought the Heaton house, the Hopkins house, and the new one which replaced the former home of Asa Burton, which had burned with the store in 1843. Lougee was unwise and soon had a cloud of misfortune hovering over him, in which the trustees were involved. They had loaned him \$1000 which they had recently received and had taken a mortgage on the new house. Later they were compelled to foreclose, with undisclosed loss, and Lougee's difficulties were so great that he soon removed from the town. Mr. Orcutt had purchased the Hopkins house of Lougee, and now bought the Mrs. Burton Hall from him.

Lougee and Orcutt pursued the same speculative course, but Orcutt knew when to stop. Keeping the Hopkins house for several years, he persuaded the men of the Hill to invest in one half of the property by means of twenty shares, each valued at \$50. Twenty-eight men responded, some of them taking fractions of shares. There were then five dormitories, or boarding houses, if we include the Orcutt home, three of them owned wholly or in part by Orcutt, one by Lougee, and one being school property. Private families were also taking roomers, and there was at all times much self-boarding.

Besides the administration of his own property and the oversight of the other dormitories, Orcutt also collected the tuitions, which involved much bookkeeping. The tuitions were small, there were many of them, and they were payable four times a year. In the four terms of the school year of 1851-1852 the total attendance was

One hundred seven

727, and calling \$3.50 a conservative estimate of the average cost to each student, the total income from tuitions would be about \$2600. It was probably much more than that. Orcutt also carried text books and stationery for sale, was agent for an insurance company, and for a newspaper. But his expenses were large. He wrote nearly a half century later,

I gave that school twelve years and a quarter of the best portion of my life, and my compensation was the support of my family while there, and the payment of a four hundred dollar debt which I owed for college expenses when I came there.⁵

Life on the Hill was far from stagnant, and if the “doings” of the older people did not furnish enough excitement, there was always the matter of at least a hundred young people. The subject of their health does not appear in Orcutt’s reminiscences, but it is known that there were several cases of smallpox in 1854 and one girl died. Many vague traditions remain of their fun, most of them fragmentary. A favourite story is told of the evening when the boys ran Orcutt’s carriage a mile down the hill to the Center village, only to see him step out and say amiably, “Now, boys, you may take me back home.” That “horning” took place, the favourite method of disturbance at Dartmouth, is evident from various allusions in the Anniversary book, although the occasions are not made clear. This was a noisy serenade by boys with tin horns, for the benefit of some villager or teacher who had displeased them.

The question is sometimes asked whether Orcutt employed corporal punishment. He undoubtedly did, for he wrote in 1858 that

Punishment, to be effective, must be thorough. A half-whipped boy is only aggravated, not conquered Many a child has been saved by the legal and moral power of the rod.⁶

There is also his repartee to Professor Arthur L. Perry, political economist, and devoted to free trade, which Orcutt recalled at the seventy-fifth anniversary gathering.

The last time I met the professor he spoke with great earnestness upon his favourite subject, alluding sneeringly

One hundred eight

to a 'duty on hides' which was then under discussion in congress. I said to him that he doubtless knew more than I did upon this disputed question but one thing I did know, I did my duty on hides when he was a student in Thetford.⁷

There are persistent traditions that difficult boys were sent to him. Most of these are also vague, but two student letters give some suggestive episodes.⁸

(A) There are some pretty bad cases of boys here, they come into prayers with green spectacles on and canes &c. One time they got an old horse up into the bell room and tied the bell rope to his neck and then put some oats on the floor, and every time he stooped to pick up the oats he rang the bell.

.
(B) Last term a man of the town fined a boy named Ingalls five dollars for cutting his name on one of the meeting house pews The next Sunday when they came to ring the bell, they found that they had lost their bell tongue, and I believe it cost ten dollars for a new one and the damage done. Ever since, when that man came on the Hill Ingalls would hoot on him

The other night he came into the store where Ingalls was with a lot of other students, and began to push Ingalls and plague him, and so they got into pretty loud talk and one of the teachers going by went in and parted them. When Ingalls went to pick up his cap the man hit him a kick and Ingalls threw a very large lamp which he had brought down to have filled, and took him right over the eye making a very bad gash. The oil ran down his neck in copious effusions and he began to spit out the oil and glass and say where is the boy who had left out of the back door.

This unfortunate affair was historically important as in a few moments it changed the fortunes of the school. Mr. Orcutt wrote later,

. . . . with all the kindness and cooperation proffered us by the trustees and leading citizens of the community we were much annoyed by the frequent collisions between another class of citizens and our students.⁹

It was immediately after this conflict in the store that he found in his mail an invitation to take charge of a "Ladies Seminary" at North Granville, New York, and being very weary and exasperated, he decided to accept it, and wrote to that effect at once. Of this he later said,

There probably had been no day before, during the twelve years of my life in Thetford, when I should have considered this call favourably The announcement created much excitement in the school and neighborhood and many strong expressions of regret followed, even by those who made all the trouble.¹⁰

The comment of the student letter writer on the outcome was "I guess Thetford Academy has seen its best day."

Of his life in Thetford, Orcutt wrote,

My labors were incessant. I had the entire financial business of the school to conduct without a clerk; the management and discipline of the school, the oversight of every department of instruction and taught classes myself from six to seven hours per day, five days a week. Added to this, and an occasional lecture before the school, was the labor of conducting a Bible class consisting of the whole school Sabbath morning; a class of young men at noon in the church; of attending two church services during the day, and a social religious meeting in the academy in the evening, in which I usually took part. And even that was not all. I had reason to expect a call at unseasonable hours to some boarding house or store, to quell a disturbance or settle a dispute.

Vacations were a welcome change, but no relief from toil and care. A new school must then be gathered, and arrangements made for an ensuing term. This was my work, my care, and my responsibility without cessation Were I again placed in the same position I should devote more hours, especially on the Sabbath, to rest and recreation.¹¹

Letters show that the health of both Mr. and Mrs. Orcutt had suffered from the strain of those years, and the work at North Granville was more easily carried on. Following five years there, he founded Glenwood Seminary at Brattleboro, Vermont, and later was principal of Tilden Seminary in West Lebanon, New Hampshire, where he was influential in the state educational work and concerned in bringing about important progressive changes. He received degrees of A. M. from Dartmouth and LL. D. from Bates College, and in 1895 was elected an honorary member of the Dartmouth chapter of Phi Beta Kappa.¹²

The later years of his life were passed in Boston, where he was connected with a publishing house, and with the

New England Bureau of Education. Mrs. Orcutt had died in 1863, and because a young child had died while they were in Thetford, her grave was made there also. Thus it chanced that Mr. Orcutt's last resting place is with them in the North Thetford cemetery.

Hiram Orcutt had great teaching ability, much business ability and a gift for organization. But many have testified that his greatest contribution to the young people was inspiration. He saw what was in them and inspired them to use their talents to the fullest extent, and he seemed to give them courage to accomplish this. There are many characterizations of him in the Anniversary volume. A typical one is from an old student in Chicago.

I have a very warm feeling for Thetford Hill
I never should have gone to college if it had not been for Hiram Orcutt. His chapel talks were on the highest plane of Christian morals and his whole life was a blazing fire-brand of enthusiasm.¹³

In his Reminiscences he wrote that many students in his various schools, "were absolutely unable to prosecute their studies without aid" and that "he made it a rule never to reject an applicant on account of poverty." His loans amounted to thousands of dollars, most of which were ultimately paid to him in full. A description of him exists as he was seen by a student in 1849.

. . . . his tall, thin, slightly stooping form, always handsomely clad in black; his jet black hair and whiskers, his dark skin and brilliant eyes; his rapid and rather ungainly gait by which, however, he got there every time.¹⁴

Twenty-five hundred different young people had come under his care in Thetford, and 133 young men had entered college.¹⁵ Thetford Academy had been a proving ground for a young educator of outstanding excellence, and his success was to continue in other places for many years.

His influence has survived in the state. In a letter to the *Vermont Chronicle* in 1850¹⁶, he proposed a State Teachers Association and gave his reasons in no uncertain words.

Our schools must be sustained and elevated. The education of the rising generation must be cared for. And to whom shall we look for this guardianship and nurture? We cannot rely upon the people for they do not feel the importance of education, nor enough of interest to warrant improvement. We cannot rely upon our school law; for it is defective and inefficient; its officers cannot accomplish anything without cooperation. The great responsibility must rest upon our teachers and the most of the work must be done by them.

The initial meeting brought together "a large and respectable body", their object being

. . . . a full interchange of views upon the subject of education in Vermont to arouse from its slumbers the public mind, and to impress upon superintendents and teachers of academies and higher seminaries their great responsibility as exponents of the public school interests.¹⁷

That they valiantly went to work in their uncharted field, is indicated by reports of their early meetings. Their first resolution was regarding "the serious evil" of the "great number and smallness of our school districts", and urged a measure of consolidation. A committee was appointed to "examine the present school laws of this state and those of neighboring states." Soon there was an address on The Liberal Education of Women. But ten years were to pass before a female teacher was given any part in the business of the association, and then it was only to procure subscribers for the organ of the Association, *The School Journal*. The first female speaker took her place on the platform twenty years after the founding of the Association. The historian of "these years when Victoria set the pattern for modest womanhood" pictures the feminine members in their "new cashmeres, poplins, or muslins, in their hoop skirts, poke bonnets, and shawls, and always alluded to as the 'female teachers'."¹⁸

In 1951, this Association, then called the Vermont Education Society, celebrated its centennial, and it was recalled that Hiram Orcutt had first suggested the Association publicly. It had steadily expanded and had exerted a strong and constructive influence on school legislation. He was a member of the Association while

he was in Vermont, was editor of *The School Journal* for four years,¹⁹ and an occasional speaker at the meetings.

II

It was fortunate for the immediate need of the school that upon the departure of Hiram Orcutt in 1855, Gilbert Hood was available. He had spent his final year of preparation at Thetford, was graduated from Dartmouth in 1851, had come back to be Orcutt's associate principal for three years, and now was to give distinguished service for three more years. He seems to have been, in every way, as successful as Orcutt. The latter was more spectacular, and he also paved the way thoroughly for Hood; but Hood had qualities of his own which endeared him to the students. Unfortunately he left no autobiographical papers, as did Orcutt, and few details of his work are available.

His wife was a former Thetford schoolmate, and while he was principal he owned and occupied the Orcutt house. His sister Eliza, one of the first young women to graduate, was his preceptress, and another sister, also a former academy student, taught for a time. The total attendance kept at a high level, being 625 for the year 1857, and in 1858 a class of 32 graduated. The students were also of the same high quality as in Orcutt's time. Hood became a lawyer by profession, but for many years was the treasurer of the Broadway Savings Bank in Lawrence, Mass., where he was concerned in many worthy causes. He was said to have been "one of the best known and most trusted men" in the city.²⁰

His Thetford catalogue of 1856 has the name of Henry Ellis Beecher Stowe as a member of the senior class. As will quickly be surmised he was a son of Calvin and Harriet Beecher Stowe. They were then living in Andover, Mass., where Professor Stowe held the chair of Sacred Literature in the Theological Seminary. As a young man he had taught in Dartmouth for two years (1831-1833), had become prominent as an educational reformer, and among his many honorary degrees were two from that college. He therefore knew the region and could hardly have failed to be at least aware of the

Thetford school. Later, in 1848, a brother of Mrs. Stowe, James Chaplain Beecher, had graduated from Dartmouth with Thetford classmates, including Charles Latham, and with Carlos Slafter as college mate. In 1855 Mrs. Stowe was at the zenith of her reputation as a writer, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* being at the time in process of translation into European languages. Mrs. Stowe's sister Catherine was also an ardent educational reformer, especially concerned with extending full advantages to women; and a brother, Henry Ward Beecher, was probably the most famous contemporary American clergyman.

Young Henry had transferred to Thetford from Phillips Academy (Andover) in December, 1855, lacking only a few months of preparation for Dartmouth.²¹ Research has failed to reveal a possible reason for the change, other than the family knowledge of the school. There may have been some unknown connection with Gilbert Hood, but it seems to be significant that Hiram Orcutt had been a student at Phillips for two years, with the exception of two winter terms, when he left to teach, and during one of these winters he taught a district school in Andover. Later he married an Andover girl. It is likely that friends there would know of the fame which he had brought to Thetford.

There may have been a tie with Thetford through the Worcester family. Dr. Ezra C. Worcester had come to the village in 1847 and soon became a trustee of the school. Stowe lived in his family, which has significance, as there had been an earlier association of the two families in Peacham, Vermont, where Dr. Worcester had been reared.²² Dr. Worcester was an unusually successful physician for his time, and the family tradition is that he cured the lad of an ailment from which he was suffering. Stowe graduated with the Thetford class of 1856 and delivered an oration entitled "Trust no Future."²³

There is an authentic tale of his early days in Dartmouth. The freshmen of the preceding year had been severely hazed and they decided to prevent such rough treatment of the next class. In carrying out their plans, two of them visited Thetford Academy, and

each offered to take a prospective freshman under his care. Stowe fell to a strong, athletic sophomore, who wrote later,

I let it be understood that whatever else might be on the tapis, it should not be conducive to longevity to enter my premises in pursuit of a freshman We kept a loaded revolver under the pillow My recollection is that this and similar combinations prevented hazing the freshmen in 1856 Stowe proved to be a delightful room mate.²⁴

This tale has a tragic ending. Henry Stowe was drowned while swimming in the river near the college in July, 1857. He was a promising youth, "full of high resolves and manly purposes", and his sudden death is said to have changed the stern theological beliefs of Mrs. Stowe's early life.²⁵

While the financial difficulties with John Lougee were yet unsettled, another situation arose for the trustees which was still more irritating. At the annual meeting of 1857 it appeared necessary to make some changes in Burton Hall. The proposition was "to repair it for a boarding house for young ladies", and the matter was referred to the executive committee with the "request that they examine the whole subject carefully and then act as they shall on the whole, deem expedient." Mr. Hood was then principal and also a trustee. The school was large at the time, having in the Spring term 198 students, and a graduating class of twenty-nine.

It has been impossible to recover details of the Hall. As has been stated, it is known that there were 16 rooms, each capable of accommodating two boys, and one would suppose that an instructor would occupy a room. Accounts of schools and colleges of earlier days testify that lodgings were often crude, and the cost of the building, "somewhat over \$1000", including \$75 for the land, would indicate that it followed the pattern. Dormitories were also likely to be mistreated, and this one was probably abused by the boys.

Abijah Howard, Jr., was then chairman of the executive committee, and taking advantage of the free hand which he assumed had been given him, he, without

consulting the committee, sold the building for \$200 to John Huntington, who had lost his home (the Heaton house) by fire. The trustees were appalled. They had no intention of selling it, and they made every effort to recover it, offering Huntington more than he had paid for it. But Howard, as chairman of the committee, had given a bill of sale and Huntington was not willing to surrender the Hall, and was making preparations to move it across the road to the site of his burned house.

The report is guarded but shows desperation. One of the characteristics of the trustees as a body, seems to have been a desire to avoid contention among themselves. They were often near neighbors and friends, and even relatives at times, and they were united in their devotion to the school. If divisions did arise they rarely appear in the records.

This case was serious, and resort to the courts was discussed. But Howard succeeded in persuading them to go through with the sale by accepting from him personally, \$200, which the trustees felt that they must have, in addition to the \$200 which Huntington had paid for the building. Howard, however, gave his note instead of cash, and it was soon found that his affairs were in a bad condition and his property was being seized by his many creditors. After a long struggle the trustees recovered the money but lost the Hall, which was needed to accommodate the large school.²⁶ Many years later this building, transformed into a comfortable dwelling house, came again into the possession of the trustees and is known in 1950 as Goddard Hall.

Howard was a man of good family and education. He had come into possession of considerable money through his wife, but had lived greatly beyond his means. He had borrowed widely, even borrowing from "Peter to pay Paul." After facing the situation for a few years under reduced circumstances, he, like Lougee, left town, and later made his home in the West. He had lived in the south part of the double house, which he had made the finest residence on the Hill. One of its

beauties was the imported scenic wallpaper which became famous in the locality.

The Misses Sarah and Charlotte Clough, teachers in the school, had operated the Mrs. Burton Hall for Mr. Orcutt, and when he left they had purchased it. Now, in 1864, having lost Burton Hall, the trustees bought its mate of the sisters for \$600. Mrs. Timothy Bartholomew, widow of a founder, had made a "liberal donation", and her name was bestowed upon the Hall, which had been known in records heretofore as The Ladies Boarding House. No record appears of the amount of the liberal donation, but an article in the Hemenway Gazetteer of Vermont states that she gave the Hall.²⁷

It will be recalled that in 1835 the so-called ornamental subjects were waning, but in the early 60's they had a new lease of life. In 1860 Miss Mary Closson, niece of trustee David W. Closson was teaching the following: Ornamental, Grecian, antique, pastel, water color, monochromatic, polychromatic, crayon flowers, crayon heads, all under the head of Painting, besides ornamental hairwork, wax flowers and leather work. These were all separate courses and varied in price from \$2 to \$10, the latter being the fee for hairwork. Painting seems to have been largely limited to copying from engravings rather than from nature. A few interesting specimens survive, some of them brilliantly colored, which show real talent. Few pictures were available for wall decorations and families gladly utilized the artistic efforts of their children.

Neither records nor traditions have been available concerning the effect of the Civil War on the welfare of the school. Vermont furnished about one quarter of her manpower, and Thetford suffered accordingly, losing sixteen young men, one family losing three sons. Three catalogues are known to have been issued during the war years, and a table gleaned from them will indicate the number and proportion of male and female students for the period.

| | BOYS | GIRLS |
|------|------|-------|
| 1861 | 54 | 56 |
| 1863 | 48 | 65 |
| 1864 | 87 | 71 |

One hundred seventeen

III

The years between 1850 and 1860 had been an educational "growing season" of more than usual significance in Vermont. The State Teachers Association, and local Teachers Institutes, were exerting a steady pressure on public opinion regarding the improvement of schools. The discussions, both public and private, emphasized the need of compulsory attendance, an enlarged curriculum, better preparation of teachers, the conviction that the common schools should be free, abolishing the district system, and the introduction of grading. One important outcome of the discussions was a law in 1867 establishing compulsory attendance of children between the ages of eight and fourteen, for at least three months of a year.²⁸ Feeble as this effort was, Vermont was the second state to pass such a law.

In any survey of the educational conditions in the state, the private academies, and their relation to the state system, would be likely to appear. At a meeting of the State Teachers Association in 1858 the following resolution was introduced:

That our academies would more effectually serve the cause of education by insisting that all persons admitted as scholars shall have made definite acquisitions, and by ascertaining the fact by actual examinations.²⁹

This was referred to a committee for consideration.

The report of the committee was submitted the next year, 1859, and is partly summarized below:

The State probably has, in proportion to its wealth and population, more and better patronized academies than any other State with a common school system;

That they, as a rule, admit pupils at all ages and weaken the efficiency of their work by trying to cover the whole range of undercollegiate instruction;

That they are not in harmony with other institutions, either above or below them; that they ill adjust themselves to the State system, and that they tend to render the common schools in their neighborhood less valuable;

That attendance upon these academies is irregular, rising in spring and fall and dropping again in winter, when large numbers return to the district schools;

That the capacity of the academies for doing good work is small, as at present four fifths of them rely wholly on tuitions for support;

That the character of their teaching force is impoverished by the fact that their government is for the greater part under the guidance of collegiates who aim at one of the learned professions, and whose attention to their labors therefore, lacks in objective and zeal.³⁰

Although written somewhat earlier than the above criticism, a report by a state superintendent provides a partial answer;

The academy can never fulfill its design until the common school is improved.³¹

Most academies were forced to offer common school subjects in order to prepare students for advanced subjects.

The next year, in 1860, the State Secretary of Education reported that there had been 69 private academies in operation during at least some portion of the past year, and he questioned the wisdom of the continuance of so many schools to which effective supervision could not be applied. Ten years later, in 1870, the State Secretary requested the town superintendents to secure for him the names of the academies and of their principals, and the number of students. Seventy-seven academies were evidently identified and only forty-two responded. Thetford Academy was one of those which did not respond. There being no official connection with the state, the academies could not be compelled to report.

Responsibility for Thetford's failure to report cannot be placed. But conditions were not stable at the time since both the principal and the town superintendent were changing. The academy records do not mention the matter. It may not have seemed important. But this, and later failures to report may explain why Thetford Academy was not given a place in the excellent account of academies in the History of Education in Vermont published in 1900 by the United States Bureau of Education (See Note 17), although it was one of the oldest schools in the state, and had been widely known.

The large attendance of the '40s and '50s has never been equalled. High schools were multiplying and there was no occasion for so many young people to leave

home for secondary education. Also it would not be easy to find again men of the caliber of Orcutt and Hood who would take the school, since a greater variety of opportunities were opening for educated men, and after Hood's day the number of students decreased, the school existing largely for Thetford and the adjoining towns.

Several promising young men had served for short periods, one being George K. Bartholomew, who later established a successful private school in Cincinnati. Another was Charles P. Chase, who was principal at two different times in two years, while he was still an undergraduate. He later taught Greek in Dartmouth and for many years was treasurer of the college. He was also to be a valuable trustee of the Academy.

For one term in 1865 the Rev. Leonard Tenney, pastor of the Hill church, and Dr. Worcester, respectively president and secretary of the trustees, carried on the school together for some reason, perhaps a result of the war. Including these two, there were eleven different principals in the eleven years (1858-1869) after Gilbert Hood left. Although courses had been introduced, the term unit still prevailed, and the names of the men who taught in Thetford are to be found in records of other schools, teaching for one term, or more.

There had been changes in the board of trustees during this period of twenty-four years, which brought changes among the officers. Enoch Slade, who followed Abijah Howard as treasurer, held the position for thirty years. Dr. Ezra Worcester was to be secretary from 1856 to 1879, twenty-three years. He was one of the main-springs of the school for about forty years, and gave his time, as he was able, to teaching chemistry and botany. Student reminiscences often referred to him. A student letter in 1855 said "he is the best teacher I ever had any knowledge of." He was their physician as well as their teacher and one student recalled having been bled by him. Several of the trustees were founding unconsciously what may be called a trustee dynasty; a son, a daughter, and a grandson of Dr. Worcester; a son and

a grandson of Enoch Slade; a son and a grandson of Captain Latham; a son of William Heaton, and a nephew of David Closson serving in future years. The Worcester daughter, Miss Eleanor, was later to have the distinction of being the first woman to be a member of the board.

Much use had been made of the doctors on the board, who both held classes and lectured on scientific subjects. Besides Dr. Worcester, several served for shorter terms, including Dr. Harry H. Niles of Post Mills, Dr. Nathaniel White a son of James, and Dr. Samuel W. Thayer, Jr., all of whom had been students at the academy, and practiced in Thetford. Dr. Thayer was later connected with the University of Vermont, and became eminent in the state as well as in the University. He was an outstanding example of men who were able to surmount the lack of a college course. His medical training was in the Vermont Medical School at Woodstock. Dartmouth later gave him an honorary Master's degree, and the University of Vermont the degree of Doctor of Laws.³²

The '40s and '50s had seen the peak of population in Thetford, reaching more than 2000, and at one time there were 720 children of school age. These years were relatively prosperous ones for both farmers and small manufacturers. The farmers boasted of nearly ten thousand sheep and the abundant water power was driving wheels for small strawboard, carriage, and woolen factories, and for linseed oil, saw, and grist mills. On the Hill new houses had appeared. Besides the Orcutt house (already noted), Dr. Worcester had built at the crossroads and Harlan Closson next to him. For some years they were partners in a nursery business, said to have been the first commercial one in the state. The carpenter, Johnson Muchmore, had built a small home at the south end, and at least one other house had been erected.

The various pastors had in turn served as trustees and then left town. Social life had been quickened by the principals and their families. It should not be forgotten that the street, later so much admired, was made

beautiful by the planting of the elms in the 1840s, at the suggestion and under the supervision of Hiram Orcutt. Rev. Wilson Farnsworth, in his missionary home in Turkey, recalled for the seventy-fifth anniversary that the work was done by the boys, including Charles Latham, Carlos Slafter, the Perrys, and himself.³³

The view from the street of the rolling hills above the valley, with the foothills of the White Mountains beyond, had made an impression upon the students which was often expressed in reminiscences. Scattered over the country from east to west, soon were to be found doctors, lawyers, college professors and presidents, clergymen, missionaries, congressmen, teachers, business men, western pioneers and farmers, and many wives, who looked back to the Thetford hill-top with affection.

CHAPTER V—REFERENCES

- ¹The 1844-45 catalogue gives the location of the rooms of all students.
- ²Orcutt, op. cit., p. 89.
- ³Eaton, op. cit., p. 124.
- ⁴The following three paragraphs are compiled from trustee and land records.
- ⁵Orcutt, letter, 1893.
- ⁶Ibid., *Hints to Common School Teachers, Parents and Pupils*, pp. 59, 60.
- ⁷Eaton, op. cit., p. 65.
- ⁸(A) Letter from Henry Townsend, 1853; (B) and from George Cleveland, 1855.
- ⁹Orcutt, *Reminiscences*, op. cit., p. 104.
- ¹⁰Ibid., p. 106.
- ¹¹Ibid., p. 92.
- ¹²Eaton, pp. 11, 12.
- ¹³Eaton, p. 137.
- ¹⁴Ibid., p. 167.
- ¹⁵Orcutt, op. Cit., p. 91.
- ¹⁶Aug. 6, 1850.
- ¹⁷Bush, George Gary, Ph.D., *History of Education in Vermont*, U. S. Bureau of Education, Circular of Information, No. 4, 1900, p. 18.
- ¹⁸V. E. A. News, Dec. 1951, a brief history of the Association by Mrs. Mabel Merrill.
- ¹⁹Orcutt, *Home and School Training*, p. 10 of Supplement.
- ²⁰Eaton, pp. 13, 41, 42.
- ²¹Alumni records of Phillips Academy; also letter from a Thetford schoolmate, Wilson Palmer, 1893.
- ²²Bogart, Ernest L., *Peacham: The Story of a Vermont Hill Town*, p. 182.
- ²³Commencement programme, author's collections.
- ²⁴Hill, William Carroll, *Dartmouth Traditions*, pp. 138, 139.
- ²⁵McCray, Florence Thayer, *The Life—Work of the author of Uncle Tom's Cabin*, pp. 248, 249.
- ²⁶Records of the secretary and the treasurer of the board of trustees.
- ²⁷Hemenway, Abby Maria, ed., *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*. vol. 2, p. 1097.
- ²⁸Stone, op. cit., p. 206.
- ²⁹Bush, op. cit., p. 60.
- ³⁰Ibid.
- ³¹Ibid., p. 61.
- ³²The Vermonter, May, 1903.
- ³³Eaton, p. 124.



Chapter VI

1867-1900

I

THE CONSTANT support of the school by the townspeople was noteworthy, but is partly explained by the fact that a body of alumni had been building up in the town, year by year; and also that the Academy Hall had become more or less a social center. Social gatherings, dramatics, prayer meetings, and sometimes even church services on stormy Sundays, were held there. If the need of repairs or refurnishings was visible, it could hardly be ignored. The repairs of the 1850s had cost at least \$600 which must have been met by contributions of townspeople and nearby alumni. This does not show on the trustees' books, but if money came in for a special purpose and was used for that purpose, why bother to record it! They could carry it all in their heads, and there was no one to realize that everything they did was part of the history of the school.

The thousand dollars called the Kingman Fund, which had been involved in the unfortunate Lougee mortgage, had probably been a legacy from William Kingman of Thetford, although there is no record of receiving it. Kingman had gone to California in the Gold Rush and had died there in 1852. After the Lougee house had been awarded to the trustees, it was rented to the pastor of the Hill church for \$60 a year. Somehow they had acquired \$150 which they invested in government bonds at 6%. In 1867 all the income that appears on the books, other than the usual land rent, was \$104, but there must have been rent from Bartholomew Hall which was not recorded.

At a special meeting in February, 1867, it was resolved

One hundred twenty-five

that the executive committee be instructed to make, at their discretion, all necessary additions to, and alterations & repairs on, the Academy and Bartholomew Hall, so called. Also to obtain by subscriptions, if possible, the money to defray the expense thereof.

Sixteen months later, in November, 1868, practically the same item appears again, and there is no indication that anything had been done. One of the periodic depressions had evidently descended again upon the institution and the board of trustees, and they were ready to be rejuvenated by some energetic person.

New names had appeared on the list of trustees, and several elections were made at this November, 1868, meeting. Rev. Richard T. Searle, the new pastor of the Hill church, was elected and, as was the custom, he was made president. Henry E. Parker, Dartmouth professor of Latin, and Solomon Goodell Heaton, son of founder William Heaton, were also elected. The executive committee members were Dr. Worcester, William Slade, and Harlan P. Closson. With the exception of Professor Parker, all these men were of Thetford, and except Heaton, lived on the Hill. The significant item on the record was that the Rev. Isaac Hosford, who had come back to Thetford, Solon K. Berry, the energetic sheriff, and Dr. Harry H. Niles of Post Mills were elected as a committee to "consult with citizens in reference to raising money." There is an air of decision, and an indication of better organization than usual.

However, a series of "no quorum" meetings followed, at one of which they decided to "make inquiries about Mr. Turner of Lyme", his qualifications as a teacher and his willingness to take charge of the school. David Turner had prepared for college at Kimball Union, and had graduated from Dartmouth, expecting to become a clergyman. But teaching attracted him and he had been principal of a "select school" in Richmond, Virginia, for twenty years. He had been held there during the war and was now at his old home, ready to take another school. His wife, a daughter of Baxter Perry, an early trustee, had attended Thetford Academy and was an experienced teacher. Not only had they both

been reared within three or four miles of Thetford Hill, but Mr. Turner had been a college mate of several Thetford men, and of Hiram Orcutt. Both Mr. and Mrs. Turner must have been well known in the Thetford community.

In March, 1869, Mr. Turner submitted the conditions under which he would consent to take the school. They follow in a condensed form.

1st, that they cause the Academy building to be repaired, painted, &c., and a suitable place provided for his apparatus; that the main hall be furnished with new seats & desks of the best style.

2nd, that they cause what is now called Bartholomew Hall to be repaired, remodeled and enlarged in such a manner as to afford a suitable residence for the family of the principal and furnish ample accommodations for not less than twenty boarders, with good kitchen, cellar, store room, wood house, water for washing and culinary purposes, and a building sufficiently large to accommodate a horse and carriage, a cow and a hog; and also furnish a garden spot; that they moreover furnish each room, except those occupied by the family of the principal, with bedstead, mattress, stove, three chairs, wash-stand, and table.

3rd, that the income from appropriations to the institutions from public state funds, amounting to one hundred dollars, more or less, and all receipts from tuition, belong to the principal.

It had been increasingly difficult to secure principals who would stay long enough to accomplish much for the school and Turner's demands reveal one cause, perhaps the chief one. The trustees must now decide either to expand and provide a convenient and up-to-date plant for the principal, or drag on in the old way of frequent changes. In modern parlance, they were "put upon the spot."

Turner's definiteness evidently galvanized everybody concerned. The financial committee at once became active and money came in surprisingly large sums. The goal was \$4000, and more than that was soon raised. The largest contribution, \$500, came from Mrs. Lucena Lord Frost of Belmont, Mass., a former Thetford girl and a pupil of Mr. Orcutt. Charles Latham gave \$400, his sister, Mrs. Barney of Cleveland, gave \$300, and

another sister, Mrs. Stockwell, gave \$100. Doubtless they were remembering their father, who had recently died. Charles Latham and Mrs. Barney's husband were officials of the famous Wells, Fargo Express Co. Four trustees subscribed \$200 each, although not all of them could easily have spared the sum. The subscriptions are preserved in the same little red book that holds the records of the 1835 fund.

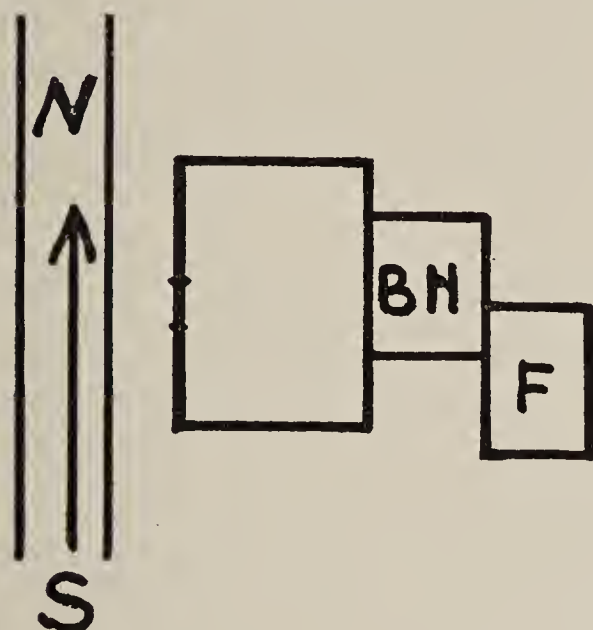
Material could be more easily assembled than in 1818 or in 1845. Lumber was to be had ready for use, and such parts as doors and windows frames were ready-made, but must be transported from Burlington, one hundred miles away. William Slade was the purchasing agent. The contract was given to Samuel Fletcher, the treasurer of the trustees, and specified that the work should be completed by August, 1870, which would be nearly a year and a half later than the acceptance of the Turner proposition.

Mr. Turner must therefore have carried on his first year under the old conditions but the trustees may have paid for the rent of a house and barn for him. Since he was soon elected a trustee and also a member of the building committee, he had an opportunity to have a hand in planning for his own future home. Living quarters for a principal had not been provided before, and it is likely that they considered him as permanent. It was doubtless this expectation that aroused so much enthusiasm.

By an ingenious combination of the new and the old, this latest dormitory was to be put together like a huge picture puzzle. The school was about to contribute another addition to the village which would command the interest of the old and the young. Imagination easily brings to view the men watching, discussing, and doubtless advising, the actors in this complicated undertaking, and small boys must have reveled in it.

The first step was to purchase the John Fitch house and land for \$500. There is a sentimental appropriateness in this transaction which was probably recalled at the time, but was forgotten as the years went by, and

the writer has failed to find a single individual who could identify the house. They then moved Bartholomew Hall back from the street twenty-six feet, and moved the Fitch house until it was placed against the Hall



on the south as an ell. At the front, or west, of the Hall, on the site from which it had been moved, they erected a new part. The contract stipulated that Fletcher was to move the buildings and construct the new part for \$700.

Apparently Mr. Fletcher had recently remodeled his own home which was evidently admired, as the specifications referred to it several times. Gables were fashionable and a large one adorned the front of the new part. The lower rooms were high-ceiled, with large paned windows coming nearly to the floor. Much masonry had to be done as there were at least six chimneys, each of those in the new part serving four rooms. Bills show that masons were paid \$2.50 a day. The cellar was enclosed by a "dry wall" of large stones, without mortar. It was very cold in winter and its usefulness in keeping food was therefore slight.

The kitchen was in the Fitch part. There were about twenty rooms in the main part, the number fluctuating as repairs or changes were made in after years. The quarters for the principal were good for the day. A cistern was built and possibly a well was dug at this time. The fact that Mr. Turner specified water suggests that there had been little available for Bartholomew Hall. An extra half acre of land was purchased and a barn built as requested.¹

In the end they had to mortgage both the academy building and the new dormitory in order to carry on the work, and they voted to sell their government bonds to pay the last bills. Slafter says that the increasing

unwillingness of the residents of the Hill to take students into their homes was one reason for providing this dormitory. Continual occupation by restless young people was hard on houses, and as the standard of living rose, homes and dooryards were more carefully kept. Nevertheless, some families were always to be found who were glad to take them. A daughter of one testified many years later that her mother felt that it was her duty to do so.

Turner's only catalogue was issued in 1870, at the close of his first year, and he left no subsequent roll of students. Thus much is lost that could shed light on his twelve years as principal. In 1869-1870 the students were almost wholly local. There were 138 different ones, 83 of whom belonged in Thetford, and all but 10 from outside were from surrounding towns, including 28 from Lyme, the home town of the Turners. The ten from outside were from New Hampshire and Massachusetts and some of them were related to Thetford families.

Slafter gives a list of Mr. Turner's assistants. Mrs. Turner was his preceptress during the first year. Among others were Katherine and Margaret Fletcher (daughters of Samuel, and granddaughters of Dr. David Palmer), both of whom were to have long and unusual experience as teachers, Katherine to become an expert teacher of the deaf and dumb at the Clark School, Northampton, Mass., and Margaret of the young Negroes at Hampton Institute, Virginia. Mrs. Laura Snow, who taught "penciling, crayoning and oil painting", was a daughter of Enoch Slade. William L. Worcester, son of the doctor, and just out of college, taught for a short time. He was to be a specialist in mental diseases. "Prof." Solon Smith was again among them, after some study of music in Boston and a period of teaching in the South. He was soon to be a superintendent of the town schools and a trustee of the academy.

Slafter, who must have seen the school at work, says that it "was a quiet and well ordered school, more in the nature of a boarding school than ever before." Besides

a paragraph discussing discipline, the 1870 catalogue had a list of fifteen "regulations" concerning neatness, decent language, loitering, card and dice playing, ardent spirits, and obedience to usual rules governing recitations. They were so definite and comprehensive that there was little danger of misunderstanding. As in the past, attendance by the permanent students at two Sunday services and Sabbath School was required.

Mr. Turner was scholarly, and devoted to the classics. His catalogue announced that

special attention will be given to the formation of classes in Greek and Latin, and the thorough preparation of young men for college.

Evidently he was a thorough English teacher also, as a student who became Professor of Oral English in Teachers College, Columbia University, has testified that he was the best English teacher that she ever knew.² Preparatory subjects were substantially the same as in earlier years. Five years were to pass before Dartmouth required American and English History, and Geometry was not yet on the list. At about this time colleges began to admit students by certificates from accredited schools, and Dartmouth did so in 1876, during Turner's reign.

There was no intimation in Turner's 1870 catalogue that young women might enter college. It was a little early to make a general statement to that effect, but in two years Vermont's own university was to admit women, and other colleges were opening their doors. Two students of this period, Persis Hewitt of Pomfret, Vermont, and Caroline Farnsworth of Turkey, graduated from Mount Holyoke Seminary in 1876 and 1877, respectively, before it secured a charter as a college, and Miss Hewitt taught there later. Miss Farnsworth entered Wellesley but left to marry and went back to Turkey as a missionary.

A notable student was Henry P. Montgomery, a young Negro who was brought from the South to Post Mills at the close of the war by Dr. Heman H. Gillett. Post Mills was now the largest and most prosperous village

in Thetford and one of its social activities was a Lyceum with a membership of more than sixty. Evidence of the absence of race discrimination was the fact that Montgomery was a vice-president of the organization, and also that he taught for a term in each of two Thetford school districts. From Thetford he went to the Randolph Normal School, graduating in 1876; and later, with a brother who had also been educated in the North, he was a pioneer in the difficult task of developing a school system for colored children in Washington. Slafter says, "He has won the approval of the most distinguished educators."

Tuitions had increased, being \$5 for elementary courses, \$5.50 for "English Academic studies", and \$6 for the classical course. Turner offered to take students for a year of four terms, including tuition, board, lights, fuel, and washing, for \$235. There were also facilities for self-boarding. In the new dormitory a pair of girls had a small wood-burning stove which heated the room and cooked the meals. A cupboard held food and utensils, and housewifely girls could manage very well. Often they pooled their food and combined in cooking it. Provisions ran low at the end of the week for those who were supplied from home, and there may have been a lack of balanced diet, but few thought of that in those days.

Bread, doughnuts, and pies were easily transported. Baked beans and a roast of pork lasted well. Milk seldom kept sweet more than a few hours except in the coldest weather, but could be procured from the neighbors. Individual wood piles were in the cellar, offering temptation to those whose supply ran out first. Many of the self-boarders lived within driving distance from the school and it was a common sight to see them arrive early on Monday morning, the wagons loaded with wood, and a box for food. One of Turner's rules was that students were not expected to return on the Sabbath.

The danger of fire was always great in the dormitory, and in later years an occasional family refused to allow a daughter to live there. But all had been accustomed

to managing a wood fire. The real danger was from clogged chimneys. Kerosene had become available in the 1860s and the use of kerosene lamps by so many young people was also a hazard.

During Mr. Turner's incumbency two additions to the assets of the school appear. In 1870 a legacy of \$5000 was received from Charles Latham, the income to be used for the aid of "indigent students", which was doubtless an echo of Hiram Orcutt's beneficence. The legacy was invested in a mortgage on a farm in the river valley, owned by the Kinney brothers, and was a valuable source of income, the rate being 6%.

Also Latham's sister, Mrs. Barney, had bequeathed \$5000 to the church for a library, which has been a blessing beyond estimation to the village and school. The church bought from the trustees the site of the lost Burton Hall, adjoining the academy lot on the north,³ and in 1877 a substantial building was erected, largely by the community, with contributions of labor and material, as well as money. The Academy catalogue of 1882 says,

The Latham Memorial Library containing nearly 2000 volumes, including dictionaries, cyclopaedias, atlases, and many other valuable reference books, besides the most choice literature of the present day, is accessible to pupils of the Academy upon the payment of one dollar per year.

Libraries, like schools, became free slowly, but \$1 a year was nearing a goal of which few were then aware. Because of its proximity to the academy buildings, the library seemed to be a part of the academy plant and the trustees contributed occasionally to its support. So exciting was it that friction developed in the village over the question of the type of books it should contain, the academy staff and the more learned asking for books of reference, while others demanded "something to read."

Records of Turner's twelve years are so meager that evaluation is difficult. According to the State Report of 1875-76 there were then but two teachers. There is some evidence that he was not progressive. Due to age and failing health, his usefulness waned during his last year, and the student body numbered about one

third less in 1881 than in his first year, 1869-1870. His ability is unquestionable, and in length of service he equaled Hiram Orcutt. He retired in 1881 and his son Charles, an alumnus of the school, and of Williams College, replaced him for a few weeks. Mr. Turner died on the Hill in 1882 at the age of sixty-seven.

II

Benjamin M. Weld followed the Turners, remaining for two and a half years. His only catalogue, for 1882-1883, gives a list of 89 students, 57 of whom were of Thetford and of the adjoining Union Village. Comparison of this catalogue with Turner's of 1870, shows that significant changes had taken place since that date, but it cannot be determined which principal was responsible for them. They were due to be made in response to developments in educational practice, and Weld was young and is said to have been eager to adopt new educational ideas.⁴

One change, which would necessitate more adjustment than appears on the surface, was the adoption of a three-term year, replacing the earlier four terms. Attendance during the summer term had always been small, yet the adoption of courses forty years earlier had made uninterrupted attendance desirable. Dropping the summer term, the unit was thereafter to be the school year, instead of the term, although its acceptance was probably slow.

A regrettable result of this change was the reduction of the income from tuitions. The price was raised, but apparently it was thought inexpedient to add more than fifty cents a term for "Higher English", and one dollar for the Classics. The effect of this reduction would be felt chiefly by the principal, who depended largely upon the tuitions for his income. Instead of a tuition of \$22 for a year of English, and \$24 for the Classics, he now had but \$18 and \$19.50 respectively. Weld, however, cut down his expenses for teachers, employing one less than is shown in Turner's catalogue.

The catalogues reveal that changes had taken place in the usage of certain words. The noun, scholar, had

been replaced by pupil, although the use of scholar was to persist in ordinary conversation for a long time. A gradual change was taking place in the use of the term, philosophy. Used in the sense of truth, or first principles, it had been a part of the titles of certain subjects. Thus Natural Philosophy, Moral Philosophy, and Intellectual Philosophy, had approximately corresponded with the later subjects Science, Ethics, and Psychology.

Also the steady expansion of science was causing division and subdivision of that subject. Comparison of items from the two catalogues suggests the coming changes, and also shows the important and significant additions to the English subjects under Weld.

| TURNER (1870) | WELD (1882) |
|--|---|
| Moral Philosophy | Natural Philosophy |
| Intellectual Philosophy | Physiology and Hygiene |
| Natural Philosophy | Chemistry |
| Mental Philosophy | Botany Geology |
| Physiology | Zoology Astronomy |
| Astronomy | Physics |
| Chemistry | |
| No literature other than Latin and Greek, and English Progressive Readers. | Select Plays of Shakespeare British and American Classics Kellogg's English Classics. |

No course for teachers is indicated in either catalogue. The classical texts were substantially alike.

So far as can be judged from the intermittent catalogues, which at the present writing are the only sources of information concerning curriculums, Weld was the earliest principal to recognize American and English literature as separate subjects for study. Orcutt, in the 1840s, had introduced his own tiny book, with 4" x 6½" pages of literary selections, but he offered it only as "exercises for parsing" and in effect it was the old-style reading book.

Weld's 1882 catalogue announced that

instructions in light gymnastics will be given to members of the school free of expense. The system will be essentially that elaborated by Dr. Dio Lewis.

This system emphasized the value of diet and exercise in promoting health, and was popular at the time. Girls

were included in the exercises, wearing a blue serge uniform with trimmings of white braid. Evening affairs, such as the Lyceum and Rhetoricals, were brightened by their exhibitions. The only allusion to gymnastics before this time had been in 1865 when the principal, George H. French, had included the subject in a prospectus. Hiram Orcutt had adopted the Lewis system some years after he left Thetford, and wrote in his *Reminiscences* that he encountered much criticism. Parents felt that the homes and farms offered enough exercise, and "Horrid mothers cried out in alarm against the indelicacy and impropriety" of the suit worn by the girls.

Mr. Weld left in the summer of 1884, apparently as a result of friction with the trustees although it is not mentioned in the records. A few of the lively boys expressed their sentiments by hanging the effigies of two prominent members of the board, which were, however, discovered and speedily cut down by the neighbors. Resentment was expressed in a less spectacular manner by several students who followed Weld to his next appointment at Orford, eight miles away. Following a departing principal was always a possibility. When Hiram Orcutt left, his hold upon the school was so great that a few Thetford families sent their young people to him for several years. Disturbances always affected attendance, and following the Weld episode of 1884 there were only three graduates in 1886, and four in 1887.

In 1884 William H. Cummings took charge of the school. As a former student and district school teacher, he had won the affection of the town, which now welcomed him back as principal. He published a catalogue in 1887 covering three years, and announced that

The most advanced and approved methods of instruction are adopted The work of the school is to prepare for college, train teachers and fit young men and women for the practical duties of life.

Apparently college attendance by women had become common-place, as he included in his list of courses, "The college preparatory in which young men and women receive a thorough drill in the classics."

College preparation now allowed the omission of Greek if preferred, and included more mathematics. Public examinations were held twice a year, and there was an outside examining committee, a member of which was a young Associate Professor of Mathematics at Dartmouth, Thomas W. D. Worthen. He had prepared at Thetford and will appear again in this history. The custom of having an examining committee had prevailed at the college forty years before, and probably prevailed in Thetford earlier than we now know. The afternoon church service had been discontinued by 1887; resident students now attended only the morning service and Sabbath School. A Chatauqua Reading Union was about to be organized.

There was an unusual arrangement of tuitions which seems to have been an inducement for students to attend school throughout the school year. For the second term there was a discount of fifty cents, and a second discount for the third term. In connection with the Latham Fund the starkness of the adjective "indigent" now was replaced by "the students who need and deserve aid."

Catalogues from time to time had announced that lectures would be given during the year, but rarely specified the subjects. Cummings announced seven lecturers, including Prof. John K. Lord of Dartmouth, who spoke on "The Birth of Modern England", and Prof. Henry E. Parker, whose subject was "The Life and Writings of Virgil." Others which were less erudite were by clergymen, one being "Methods safely different, whenever there is accurate teaching and thorough training in elementary principles", by the current pastor of the Hill church, the Rev. Harry Brickett.

Cummings did not publish a code of rules as did Turner, but said, "The rules of the school are only such as ought to regulate the conduct of ladies and gentlemen." However, he must have had such a code. A student of his time recalls that he

was very strict about the mingling of the sexes
I suppose he had to be, as there was not much to do but
to make eyes at each other in spare time. I can recall

some coasting and a little skating, but most of us were too poor even to own skates. There was a rule known by a certain number, which forbade boys escorting girls. Once in a great while Mr. Cummings would announce that the rule would be suspended. Then great fluttering! Of course we didn't dance, unless it was a Virginia Reel occasionally, but endlessly marched called a Promenade, with intricate figures to the music of a wheezy old organ. But we were having great fun. Our intellectual amusement was the Lyceum with a debate, and a 'paper' made up of literary contributions from the students. The village people attended these functions, which were quite worth while.⁵

Cummings had brought with him Miss Etta F. Morse as preceptress, who made a lasting impression on the student body, and affection for her was still expressed in 1950 after more than half a century. Cummings apparently left because of inadequate financial support, but for some unknown cause there were but two graduates in 1890. Later he was a beloved and successful principal of Kimball Union Academy. Slafter says of his departure, "When Thetford Academy shall be properly endowed, such embarrassing interruptions will be less frequent."

Julian N. Mallory followed Mr. Cummings in 1888 and was able to retain Miss Morse. He held the position successfully and was interested in encouraging sports, playing with the boys on occasion. Letters from his daughter, however, speak of the hardships of life in the dormitory and the meager income. She relates that tuitions were occasionally paid in produce or poultry, sometimes live poultry. Transportation was difficult and few principals could afford to keep a horse. One must be hired unless a kindly neighbor or trustee would lend one. Mallory always had a garden and sometimes a cow. But he could not make a living and left at the end of three years.

One of the activities of Mallory's time, and also of his successor, was The Thetford Telegraph Club, the records of which survive. It was made up of students, both boys and girls, who lived or roomed on the Hill and Mr. Mallory, a skillful operator, was a member. Wires were strung between several of the houses and to rooms in

the dormitory, and the outfits were partly home made, including ink bottles for insulators. The fee was twenty-five cents a term, which took care of supplies. Mallory said that these connections aided him in "keeping track" of the students.

Some of the members used the skill thus acquired, in their life work. Philip Cartee was the station agent of the Boston & Maine Railroad at Thetford for forty-six years. Others followed some form of railroad activity in various localities. A member of the club was Warren G. Kendall, who was in the school a year. He had already learned the code from his station-agent father, and after graduating from Dartmouth and holding administrative positions in railroad business, he was awarded the Presidential Certificate of Merit and the Navy Certificate of Appreciation for his services in the very difficult problem of Defense Transportation during the two World Wars.

This period of more than thirty years saw a complete change in the personnel of the trustees. Judge Short was the last of the founders to go, dying in 1877 at the ripe age of ninety. At his resignation he had been a trustee for forty-two years. An obituary characterized him as

a man of culture and intelligence . . . a careful student of literature as well as a patron of education. His social qualities made him the charm of the social circle.

As always, local men bore the burdens of administering the school, and of these, George S. Worcester, son of the doctor, was elected in 1886 and was immediately placed on the executive committee. Fred E. Garey of the Hill was elected the same year and became the treasurer the next year. Judge Samuel M. Gleason of Thetford Center and Harlan P. Cummings of North Thetford were others who held offices.

In 1891 Professor Worthen was elected. He was a native of Thetford, and like the others, he understood country life and the country children. His grasp of the problems of the trustees, his increasing experience in education and his ability to inspire affection made him

one of the most valuable and constructive members of the long list of trustees through the years.

In 1892 a special meeting was called over the signatures of the Rev. Samuel V. McDuffee, pastor of the Hill church, George Worcester, and William Paine, the local doctor, "to see if measures can be adopted to secure an endowment fund", and Professor Worthen was chosen to prepare a circular showing the need of a fund. The only item connected with this plan which appears on the records, is in the report of the annual meeting of the next year, when they appoint an "endowment committee."

Fortunately there are newspaper clippings which tell the story. As a first step they wisely planned to hold a reunion at the time of the next commencement in June, 1893, and George Worcester seems to have been the moving spirit. The affair was successful, more than fifty being present. An "Association of the Pupils of Thetford Academy" was organized, which resembled the later Alumni Association, and considerable enthusiasm was aroused for holding a "great celebration" in the following year, which would be the seventy-fifth anniversary of the opening of the school. Gilbert Hood was present and was one of the speakers, and also Dr. Thomas W. Bicknell, Commissioner of Education for Rhode Island; and of course, Prof. Worthen, besides other local alumni.

The "great celebration" of the next year, 1894, had been well planned and was a noteworthy success in every way. Newspapers made the somewhat exaggerated statement that nearly a thousand former students were present, but the attendance is known to have been large. The date was June 28, and the day

opened auspiciously. Those who had arrived the night before began their personal greetings at dawn The arrival of extra coaches and private carriages constantly added to the happy multitude When the company finally reached the familiar hall and saw the old table and the well known blackboards and bell rope, and many of the old seats where their backs had ached in unison, it seemed as if the years had fled and they were back at the school.⁶

At least seven of the ex-principals were present, and when Mr. Orcutt rose to speak "there was such a hub-bub as he never allowed within those walls."

Lunch was served in a large tent by the alumni of the town, and there was much informal speaking there. The afternoon meeting was held in the church and Carlos Slafter's "Historical Discourse" was then delivered. There was also an address by Dr. Bicknell, an original poem by Edward A. Jenks, state printer and court reporter, of Concord, N. H., followed by the guest speaker, President William J. Tucker of Dartmouth, who discussed "The relation of the academy and the college", notes of which, unhappily, have not been found. The evening was largely given to reminiscences.

The subject of Dr. Bicknell's address was "The Future of Thetford Academy", in which he sketched the ideal school, and discussed the increasing demand for industrial and technical education, which, however, should not be at the expense of "the broad cultural studies." He looked forward to the time when the hills and valleys of New England shall again

give birth to and rear great men and women, and find for them home pursuits in the cultivation of the soil, in fruit culture, in the production of herds of cattle, sheep, and horses, and in the many handicrafts which can be nourished and sustained among the healthful scenes and fair surroundings;⁷

where students receive education from noble scenery as well as from teachers.

His vision included a new site, dormitories, a new school building with laboratories, library, and workshops. He recognized that the task was great, and that a man must arise who could energize and guide such a project. "There are lions in the way, but somewhere there is a man stronger than the lion."⁸ This vision parallels the one of three decades later, when a man appeared who overcame the lions.

The published record of these meetings is a revelation of the work which the school had been doing, and of the affection for it which still prevailed. Never before, had so many distinguished people gathered in Thetford.

A formal Alumni Association was organized, of which Dr. Bicknell was elected president. There was a long list of vice-presidents, with John Eaton, Civil War General, former United States Commissioner of Education, and President of Marietta College, at the head of the list. Senators Justin S. Morrill and William E. Chandler were named as honorary vice-presidents.⁹

It seems, looking backward, that the time to have struck was when the iron was hot; that with a thousand people, more or less, something could have been done toward raising a fund immediately. The reason for failure to do so is not apparent. The anniversary exercises were held in June, and not until October was a committee appointed for the purpose, of which George Worcester was secretary, and Gilbert Hood treasurer. Hood had been elected a trustee shortly before, for the second time, he having served in the 1850s when he was principal. He was now in the midst of his banking career and was generously supporting philanthropic causes in his home city, Lawrence, Massachusetts. A vast amount of work had been done prior to the anniversary in obtaining addresses of alumni, as no record of them had been kept. But much still remained to be done and the drive did not gain momentum for several years and will be discussed in the next period.

The school had evidently presented a good appearance at the time of the anniversary. Speaking of the principal, Fred W. Newell, Slafter said

the school is doing its work with a vigor and effectiveness worthy of an institution whose past record is so honorable. It is a well ordered, earnest, hard-working, progressive school, and well adapted in every respect to the wants of the surrounding community.¹⁰

The custom of issuing catalogues was passing. They had been financed by a few of the principals as a means of attracting students, but apparently only two were published during this period of thirty-three years. Thus a valuable source of information is lacking.

Slafter, however, gives Newell's assistants, and it is noteworthy that most of them were Thetford people, as

they had been in Turner's day. They included Miss Alice A. McDuffee, daughter of the Hill pastor, Miss Margaret Fletcher, and Miss Mary G. Niles of Post Mills. George Worcester was teaching "vocal music, as in past years." He had evidently followed Solon Smith. They were both well-known singing school teachers of the old type, giving courses in other towns as well as at home. The text of the beloved school song, "Fair Thetford", was written during this decade by Edith McDuffee of the Class of '92, a sister of Alice. At the present writing it has stood the test of more than a half century as the best expression of affection for the school. (See Appendix 8.)

Mr. Newell left in the summer of 1896, after five years with the school, and between that time and the summer of 1899 there were two principals. The first one, Franklin M. Westfall, was a desirable man for the position. His students have spoken especially of his personality, and of his skill in the class room, where, teaching without a text book, he held their attention and interest.¹¹ This was a far cry from the methods of early academy days when questions were printed at the end of each chapter and answers learned by rote. There was no resident physician at the time and no telephone on the Hill, and Mr. Westfall's family conditions were such that he left at the end of two years.¹²

He was followed by Herman N. Dunham, who was unable to maintain order, and therefore could not command the full respect of the students, especially the lively boys. They enjoyed bothering him. There was a tall flag pole opposite the academy building which was used for weather signals, and offered temptations to hoist various articles which demanded ingenuity to recover. Perhaps recalling the episode of a few years earlier, some of the boys, allowed temptation to "get the better of them", and they used the pole for an effigy of the principal, clothed in his own garments.

Lesser disorders took place, one being the loss of the bell tongue. This, however, was not the first time that the tongue had disappeared. The records indicate that repairs on the bell had taken place from time to time.

Mr. Dunham was fortunate in having a capable assistant, Miss Clara Hookway, who did much to counteract the irregularities of the year.¹³ Both Westfall and Dunham served as superintendent of the town schools while they were in Thetford, and although they differed in personality, the published report of each shows educational intelligence and wise criticism.

There was an unexplained apathy of the trustees during the last years of the century. Between November, 1897, and May, 1899, there was no quorum at any meeting, and therefore no business was transacted. On the latter date only election of officers took place, and at the following meeting there was no quorum. The matter of a fund is not mentioned anywhere but doubtless much discussion took place at the incomplete meetings, and the executive committee must have been held over. The board had energetic and resourceful men on its roll and the situation is mystifying, but the school was again at a low point.

CHAPTER 6—REFERENCES

- ¹Compiled from academy and land records.
- ²Azubah Latham, a granddaughter of Capt. Latham.
- ³Academy and land records.
- ⁴Letters from his daughter and reminiscences of students.
- ⁵Letter from Helen F. Slade.
- ⁶Eaton, op. cit., p. 7.
- ⁷Ibid., p. 88.
- ⁸Ibid., p. 92.
- ⁹Ibid., p. 10.
- ¹⁰Slafter, op. cit., p. 48.
- ¹¹Letter from Closson H. Barrett.
- ¹²Letter from his daughter.
- ¹³Letter from C. H. Barrett, op. cit.



Chapter VII

1900-1907

I

COMING IN THE AUTUMN OF 1899, Luman R. Bowdish was the principal in the opening years of the century. His first impression was that discipline had become "simply a foreign word."¹ It was his task to restore order. He had a sense of humor which enabled him to handle disciplinary problems with originality and the lively boys soon learned that it was better to avoid the ridiculous positions in which they found themselves.

He was outspoken, and in some respects he was ahead of his times, which are characteristics that do not usually commend a man to his contemporaries. He also had some peculiarities which are sometimes more easily recalled than his strong points. But the fact that he remained six years is testimony that conditions improved.

He was not a college graduate but his training had been in the Albany, N. Y., Normal College, which doubtless fitted him for the special problems which Thetford presented. All who have recalled him agree that he was an excellent teacher. For his own subjects, mathematics and the sciences, he used the New York regent examinations.² He also taught a Teachers Course, prescribed by Vermont, which granted a second grade certificate, valid for two years. At first he offered it only to "Graduates of any Higher Course" but in his second year it was open to all seniors, qualified in his third year to "seniors of good ability." The other courses offered were English, Latin-Scientific, and Classical; and he added privately, type-writing, telegraphy, penmanship and book-keeping. He was fortunate in having effective assistants.

He issued a prospectus for his first year, and catalogues for 1901 and 1903, the latter being the final one issued for

One hundred forty-five

the school. Mrs. Bowdish was matron and managed the boarding department. Room and board, with everything furnished, was \$4 a week. One meal was twenty cents. Tuitions for a term were \$6 and \$7, and room rents \$5 to \$7. He estimated that by self-boarding, expenses could be reduced to \$50 a year, "outside of books." One of his teachers, a college graduate, has testified that she was paid \$6 a week and her board.

His "Aim", as expressed in his catalogues, gives a glimpse of his personality.

We seek to form men and women rather than human machines, and believing that some of the higher education today tends to produce a trained criminal rather than the honest artisan, we emphasize all those principles of life which lead men to be wise and great instead of rich and powerful.

In his second catalogue, after four years in the school, he says,

Great care is taken that all associations of students shall be decorous and elevating, and the most fastidious need not fear to send their sons or daughters, for the discipline is most perfect.

Certain changes which had been slowly developing gathered momentum during this period and contributed to his success. One was the long desired legislation by the state guaranteeing free secondary education. This eventually brought great changes in academy affairs and was a factor in saving the school from extinction. Vermont had been conservative and had temporized by making such improvements permissive rather than mandatory.

In 1894, the first mandatory law had provided that every town with a population of 2500 or over must maintain a high school, and smaller towns were permitted to do so.³ Thetford having then about one half of 2500 could therefore have postponed paying tuition to the academy until the law compelled her to do so. But there is a record of \$24 paid in 1895, and in the next year \$84 was paid. The inference is that those who were eligible received it. \$207 was paid in Bowdish's first year and the amount steadily climbed, reaching \$552

for the year 1904-1905. This in spite of the fact that in 1902 and 1903 loosely constructed laws were passed which might have permitted the town to refuse to pay, a condition which was not rectified until shortly after Bowdish's period.

Examinations were a stumbling block at first. Students were, of course, required to give evidence of adequate preparation for high school work, and the small number that passed the tests revealed the weakness of the district schools. In 1905 the Thetford town superintendent announced that "of the large number examined, two were successful."

It is evident, however, that unprepared students were not excluded from the academy but they would be expected to pay their own tuitions. In the catalogue of 1901 there were sixteen students who were classified as "irregular"; and Mr. Bowdish announced that "No one will be allowed, in future, to represent this school in athletics who does not take three regular studies." In 1903 there were forty-five "unclassified" students, with no explanation. In that year the tuition was raised to \$8 on all subjects, which would possibly reduce the number of those who paid their own tuitions.

A second factor in Bowdish's success was the development of organized sports in schools and communities. Boys had always thrown and kicked balls, but curbing roughness, and bringing order and discipline through rules was a long time in coming. In Dartmouth both baseball and football developed slowly and by the late seventies intercollegiate games were taking place on a small scale.⁴ A historian of the college has written that

It seems to be true that the growth of sport was a large factor in doing away with the tendency toward riotous disorder which in former days had afforded the chief vent for youthful energy⁵

Thetford boys surely must have been aware of the activities in Hanover.

The Hill community had produced some skillful and ardent baseball players, notably seven Coombs brothers, and teams made up of any available boys evidently had

One hundred forty-seven

existed from time to time. One of the brothers had played on the College team at Dartmouth in the 1880s, which doubtless stimulated interest, although college sports were in an undeveloped stage. Academy teams were probably first organized in the decade of the 1890s, which played against boys of the town or of neighboring towns. A modest little published folder exists for the season of 1901, giving a schedule of games with Newbury and St. Johnsbury academies under Captain John H. Huntington. Much depended upon the faculty, and Bowdish's first catalogue, for 1901, says that athletics are fostered by the teachers. His earliest vice-principal, Leroy Andrews, is said to have organized the first academy football team in 1900, and Andrews' successor, Jacob Wignot, the first basketball team in 1901.

Bowdish's 1903 catalogue says that

strong teams of foot ball and base ball have developed during the last four years. Thetford won the football pennant in 1900, with Bradford and Newbury, and has beaten one football team from the highest rank of College Preparatory schools. An Athletic Association has been formed to control all games, qualifications of players, insignia worn, and honors bestowed.

Winfield H. Stone, the vice-principal in 1903, managed athletic activities with such pronounced success that the trustees added \$50 to the salary which Bowdish paid him; and when Stone left they voted to give Bowdish \$325 if he would secure a vice-principal equal to Stone and a college graduate.

The common in the midst of the village offered a convenient field, although nearby houses, and especially the store, occasionally suffered broken windows from straying balls. There was a fence around the common and the local boys became adepts at vaulting it and retrieving balls quickly, thus having an advantage over visiting teams, which doubtless was resented at times.

A third aid to Bowidsh's efforts was an increased income for the school. During the incomplete trustee meetings of 1896-1899, the importance of a fund was doubtless discussed as an outcome of the 1894 reunion. Gilbert Hood may not have been present at the meetings,

One hundred forty-eight

but he must have been in close touch with the trustees, as he was a member of the committee for raising a fund, and the records show that he was present at the adjourned annual meeting of May, 1900.

Two months later, in July, the following communication from him was in the hands of the trustees.

Believing that Thetford Academy has helped many towards a higher, broader, more useful life, and that with a comparatively small amount of money wisely handled, its usefulness can be continued and perpetuated, I will duplicate, to be invested as a permanent fund, the income to be used for the academy, every dollar that shall be contributed, or securely pledged with interest, for this purpose on or before Jan. 1, 1901, until the entire sum shall amount to ten thousand dollars.

Mr. Hood had evidently kept in touch with his old academy friend, Edmund F. Slafter, for soon he contributed \$3000. Later, Slafter gave another thousand, and the \$10,000 was soon in hand.

It will be recalled that Hood had prepared for Dartmouth at Thetford and had been a successful principal of the school in the 1850s. Slafter had also prepared there for Dartmouth and had attended the Andover Theological Seminary, but had turned to the Episcopal church and had taken orders in that faith. After some years of service he was deprived of the use of his voice, and later became prominent because of his historical publications and his official connection with important historical societies.⁶

He had also had considerable business experience and, although he was not yet a trustee, he prepared a plan for the management of the fund, which was accepted "as amended by Mr. Hood." This plan provided

that the said permanent fund shall be kept separate and apart from all other funds; that it shall be invested in good, safe and productive securities, regard being to safety rather than large income; that no part of the said fund shall be invested in dormitories or other school buildings The investment committee shall make an annual report to go upon the records, stating in full what the investments are and the income from each received.

The roll of trustees was full and Slafter could not be elected until there was a vacancy. As far back as 1883 they had voted that absence from two consecutive annual meetings "may make the place vacant by vote of the trustees." This situation arose several times and now Dr. Bicknell, who lived in Providence, R. I., was dropped and Mr. Slafter was elected at the annual meeting of 1901.

An investment committee was then in order, and Hood, Slafter, and Worthen were elected at this meeting. This committee, with a banker at the head, was an excellent one. Each man would be likely to be conservative in regard to investments, would be faithful to the interests of the school, and each had exceptionally good judgment. Mr. Slafter was soon authorized to prepare and publish a report of their work, and in this pamphlet of fifteen pages, issued in 1902, is included a history of the fund.

It should be said here that no man of wealth has ever been vitally interested in Thetford Academy. The accumulation of wealth calls for special talents which are somewhat rare, and the tendency of both trustees and faculty had been to emphasize the professions. Nevertheless, business men who had gathered fortunes must have appeared among the alumni during the years. Losing sight of them was perhaps one of the penalties of neglecting to keep records. While both Mr. Hood and Mr. Slafter were prosperous, they would not be called wealthy. They had many interests, and both being childless, they had more to spare.

The situation is clear in the history which Mr. Slafter compiled. There were no contributions of four figures except from these two men. The largest three figure contribution was \$300. Of three who subscribed \$250, one was a man in the millionaire class who was born in Thetford, but had not attended the academy and was not particularly interested in education. There were fourteen who gave \$100 each, some of whom had to give notes, and of these, four were trustees. Twenty-five gave \$25 each, and so on, down to \$2. But it should be remembered that the total sum, \$12,400, was more

One hundred fifty

impressive in 1900 than a half century later, and that interest rates were higher.

Mr. Slafter felt that eventually the fund would reach \$100,000. He wrote,

To most of us the Academy gave us our start in life It should be to the coming generations, what it has been to the generation which is now passing away It is for us to say what its future shall bring forth.

The fund was invested in railroad bonds and in four mortgages, which should, he thought, add not far from \$500 to the annual income; and a year later the 1903 catalogue says "Thanks to the new income we are able to employ college graduates for vice-principal and preceptress."

The catalogue also reported many repairs and improvements of the plant.

The Academy building has been raised and put on new foundations, the chapel has a new cabinet organ and modern opera chairs added; physical apparatus with tables for experiments, and a full line of first-class chemicals are great aids in the teaching of the sciences All the buildings have been thoroughly painted, partially reshingled, and an iron roof put on the troublesome north side. New stairs have been laid in the house, and four new rooms have been finished off in the ell and new furniture put into them.

There had evidently been leaky roofs, worn-out stairs, and a lack of apparatus. The school building was raised in order to provide a laboratory in the basement, which had long been needed. While it was convenient to have the added space under the building, the laboratory was not a success, as will be seen later. Raising the building also changed its proportions, making it less attractive.

There was reason for a certain amount of gratification for all these improvements, but modern ideas called for many more, and in this same catalogue (1903), George Worcester made an earnest appeal for running water, for another dormitory which would make it possible to house the boys separately, for a new and adequate school building, and for a gymnasium.

The repairs and improvements had probably been supported, at least in part, by the community. It has

been proved many times in the history of the school that if someone starts a ball rolling, others rise up to see that it keeps rolling. The ladies of the parish had organized a "Benevolent Society" in 1898,⁷ which was destined to become permanent and extraordinarily effective. They developed skill in raising money as needed, and had soon turned their attention to the needs of the Academy.

In 1900 they had taken over a class room and cleaned it, whitened the ceiling, cleaned and varnished the desks, applied new slate to the black boards, renewed the wall paper and added a moulding around the top, cleaned the windows and replaced broken panes, cleaned and polished the stove, stained the woodwork and the floor, provided a new wood box, and new shades. These activities expressed the energy of the New England housewives. Some money and some articles were contributed, and money was raised by "Socials".

Socials were a favourite activity of country communities. They combined a general good time with the sale of refreshments, such as coffee and sandwiches, which were usually contributed, and perhaps a short entertainment. Dramatics were often included, in which case a small admission was charged. Records indicate that the whole subject of the academy was canvassed by the Society, and the need of a better building must have been discussed, as they appointed a committee to talk with a contractor about a new one. This discussion took place a half century before a new building was an actuality.

A fourth addition to the efficiency of the school plant was the installation of the much desired water supply in 1904, which contributed to the comfort of both students and faculty. The Hill is a small mountain about five hundred feet above the river, which is only two miles away by travelled road. A water supply had always been a problem in the village. The homes were supplied by wells and cisterns, some of which became dry in summer. Even without bathrooms, a large amount of water was needed in the dormitory. The subject had often been discussed, and in May 1902, it was seriously considered in a trustee meeting. Perhaps no item in all their records reveals more clearly the restrictions of their financial

thinking, than does the vote at this time, that the expense must not exceed \$200.

Mr. Hood was present, but it would be like an experienced man to postpone judgment until inquiries were made, and at a later meeting an investigating committee was appointed, the report of which has not been found. The following summer, 1903, was a very dry one and wells failed. A special effort was made to raise money at once, and in October Mr. Slafter offered \$300 if \$1000 should be raised in three months. Mr. Hood soon duplicated the offer, and about \$600 more was subscribed.

The position of the street on the top of the Hill made it necessary to go nearly a mile to a higher point for a spring. One hundred dollars was paid for one north of the village, and much blasting had to be done, as the severe climate made it necessary to lay the pipe well below the frost line. Lead pipe was used which was customary. Water was put into the parsonage because the Rev. A. L. Loder had contributed generously, and into one other house.

The academy supply was limited at first to the dormitory. The usual procedure in country houses and barns was to conduct water by gravity into a tank or barrel through an "aught" gauge, with a corresponding outlet, thus keeping the water moving. A spring must therefore be higher than the buildings. Even with this precaution, water often froze in extreme weather, and a large building without central heat presented special problems.

At this time some of the boys occupied rooms in the kitchen ell. A large tank was installed in the third story of the main part of the dormitory and water was conducted to the first floor, where a faucet and a small sink were placed on each side of a partition which separated the boys' and girls' hallways. Pitchers and pails could thus be filled without going out-of-doors to a well. As there was no central heat in the building, bathrooms could not be installed. The kitchen was still supplied by a cistern and a pump.

Some labor was contributed to this project, and the total expense was apparently about \$2000. The con-

venience was much appreciated and nearby residents soon saw the advantage of a household supply and induced the trustees to gradually extend the service. This brought new problems in the future.

Interviews with former students testify that Bowdish was effective in keeping order. He "kept track of them day and night", and said, as did Hiram Orcutt, that an academy principal must be on duty eighteen hours a day. One ex-student has boasted of "getting ahead of him." Wishing to leave the dormitory secretly after dark, when a light snow was on the ground, he walked out backward and came back in the same footprints.

Living in the town through the year, Bowdish made a point of becoming acquainted with the families of his students. It was his habit to give weekly lectures to the school and occasionally he talked plainly on sex subjects, which was too modern for the parents and for some of the trustees, but the talks are reported to have been sensible and timely. He was a Spiritualist, and in later years published a book with the title *Nuggetts of Truth from Beyond the Veil*. Although he occasionally revealed his beliefs, no indication of disapproval by parents has been found.

Following the recent custom, he was appointed to serve as superintendent of the town schools. He was well equipped for the position and his published reports show constructive criticism. His disposition to be outspoken is preserved in his statement that one of the school houses was "not a fit place for cattle. . . . there is nothing about it to be recommended except, perhaps the clapboards, or the briars nearby." However, it was well known that certain school houses were in bad condition, and the next town report states that the house in question now has a "new interior and new seats."

At the end of five years he left the school far better than he found it, and the final test of his work lies in the records of his students. They are not complete, but at least eleven entered the University of Vermont, including two young women. Two entered Dartmouth, and seven went to other colleges. Fred and George

Cook, brothers, entered West Point and Annapolis respectively. At least nine went on to Normal Schools, and many who took the academy Teachers Course became successful teachers. Of the college men two sons of George Worcester filled college professorships. Raymond Vaughan spent his entire professional life in the Detroit schools. Westley Hunt became an eminent surgeon in New York City. Business claimed many, as usual, some of whom were loyal supporters of the school in the future.

Mr. Hood had died in 1904. He had left, in trust, real estate in Lawrence valued at between \$15,000 and \$20,000, the income to be used by his sister and her husband during their lifetimes. It was then to pass to the academy trustees. Although possession could not be expected for some years, the prospect added to the encouragement which the fund had aroused. The school had lost a good friend, and resolutions adopted by the trustees declared that

in every relation to this school his loss will be deeply felt and his wise counsel and hearty friendship will be as long remembered as his great liberality.

II

Bowdish was the first principal to leave a register of students, which had become necessary because of the increasing connection of the school with the town and state. He resigned in the summer of 1905 and was followed by James R. Childs, who remained two years. Childs was given \$400, tuitions, room rents, the sale of supplies and kerosene, and any profit from boarding students. He paid his assistants, and wrote that "it was a strenuous life, but we enjoyed it and made a comfortable living."⁸ He was a young man with a wife, but no children.

A prospectus for his second year states that the attendance had been sixty-four. The students had been active in refurnishing the school building. They had contrived to earn money in various ways, and with some help from outside, had procured

new desks, chairs, organ stool, pictures, new windows for the Academy Hall, a clock, 200 feet of blackboard, hymn books, book racks, new wall covering, and about \$100 for Physical apparatus A corresponding love and interest for T. A. has developed.

Housing the boys had always been a problem, and the latest plan of having them in the ell of the dormitory had been unsatisfactory. The trustees had discussed the matter of purchasing the house which Hiram Orcutt had built, and in 1906 Edmund Slafter again came to their rescue and presented it to them. His name was given to the house, and it proved to be a valuable convenience and an asset to the school. The fund and this gift made it necessary to alter the charter of the school, which had limited the value of the property held by the trustees to \$10,000. In 1908 the limit was removed by the Legislature and thereafter they could hold "any estate, real or personal."

The final mandatory law, with no loopholes, by which all towns must provide high schools, or pay tuition elsewhere, was passed in 1906, during Childs' first year. His prospectus for the following year says,

Working with the School Board and the Superintendent of the town schools, the Principal will admit to the regular courses in the Academy no student from the town who has not passed the town examinations.

But adjustment to the new conditions had been slow and he was evidently compelled to carry a preparatory course of elementary subjects, including reading, writing, and spelling. The tuition remained at \$8 a term, or \$24 a year, for all courses. Mr. Childs was a graduate of Amherst, and three graduate assistants made a strong faculty.

Seeking to extend its school supervision, the state had established "Unions" in 1907, whereby a group of small towns could collectively employ a trained superintendent and receive generous aid from the state for the purpose.¹⁰ This was a long step ahead for Thetford schools, and would affect the academy by sending to it more and better prepared students in the future. The first superintendent for Thetford under this plan was Linwood

Taft, who happened to make his home in the town, and was elected to the academy board at once.

Free schools had been "something new in the history of education." Surprising as it may seem in the mid-twentieth century, men had objected to being taxed to educate children which were not their own. They had to be convinced by such untiring leaders as Horace Mann, who, a half century earlier, had been the great pioneer in urging the public support of schools, on the thesis that universal education was necessary in a republican form of government. In Thetford, the way had led from the voluntary union of the settlers on the river in 1773, through organized self-supporting districts for elementary instruction in the 1780s and 1790s, the support of which was assumed by the town and state in 1892. And now, with a free secondary school, the young people were to have privileges which were not dreamed of when the academy was founded.

Another trying financial experience for the trustees came to a head during the school year of 1907-1908. The trustees had been struggling for several years with the problem of the Kinney mortgage. The income from this mortgage had a two-fold significance to the school. By means of it, aid was extended to needy students, which in turn tended to increase attendance. The mortgage had been running since 1872 as the investment of the Latham fund of \$5000. The Kinneys were kindly and honest people, but not practical. There were, at first, the father and two unmarried sons. After the father died, the sons remained on the farm but gradually did less and less farming. In the thirty-seven years they had been able to reduce the mortgage but \$100, and in recent years had not been able to pay the interest.

The trustees, like the Kinneys, were kindly and honest. They were also old friends and neighbors of the Kinneys and had naturally hesitated to take action. But they now saw that because of their responsibility to the institution, something must be done. When the decision to act was made, one trustee voted nay, and two abstained from voting. After giving the brothers a year

of grace, the farm was sold, and the trustees recovered the amount of the mortgage, but had the unhappy prospect of seeing the brothers cared for by the town.¹¹

CHAPTER 7—REFERENCES

¹Letter to the author.

²Uniform and high grade examinations issued by the New York State Board of Education which are accepted as standard.

³Stone, op. cit., p. 230, 231.

⁴Richardson, Leon B., op. cit., p. 640.

⁵Ibid., p. 636.

⁶Although born in Norwich, he was reared in Thetford. Following service as rector in churches in Cambridge and Jamaica Plain, Mass., he became one of the most active members of the New England Historical & Genealogical Society, as director, corresponding Sec., member of the committee for publications, and contributor to the organ of the Society, *The Register*. He also served as secretary, vice-president, and president of The Prince Society, an organization founded to preserve and extend the knowledge of American History by editing and publishing important source material.

⁷Ms. records of the Ladies Benevolent Society. This society aided the school many times.

⁸Letter to the author.

⁹Stone, op. cit., p. 231.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 70, 71.

¹¹Trustee and land records, and recollections of many.



Chapter VIII

1907-1919

I

SHINING THROUGH THE last years of the school's first century like a ray of light, although dimmed at times, was the gradual assumption by the town of a share in the support of the academy. The act of paying the tuition of all qualified students, while seemingly a routine affair, had been, in fact, a matter of much significance. Earlier, although most of the townspeople had attended the school, and were deeply attached to it, it had been in no sense theirs. Any decision in regard to its policies had been made by a self-perpetuating private board, some members of which lived outside the town and state. However, the townspeople had always been proud of it when it was prosperous, and sensitive to its shortcomings when it was at its lowest ebb, and when they began to raise money by taxes to pay tuitions, the tie was strengthened.

In 1907 the school had partially recovered from its troubles of the late nineties, but everyone knew that its financial affairs were still in a bad condition. Despite the fund and the support of its friends, it could not pay its bills. The cost of everything connected with the school was expanding. Assistant teachers must be college graduates and could therefore demand larger salaries. New subjects must be added to the curriculum, which called for more teachers and more apparatus. Additional buildings were needed which would conform to modern ideas, and the constant repairs on the old buildings exhausted the treasury. And back of all these demands lay the fact that the average Vermonter changed his habits and his philosophy slowly. He, personally, was receiving more money by means of higher wages or higher prices, and new possibilities of investment, but

One hundred fifty-nine

having been so much engaged in thrift, it was difficult for him to apply the new conditions to his own dealings with others.

One of the obstacles encountered in trying to interpret the scattered items concerning the school has been that from the beginning nearly all the business matters were left to the executive committee, which doubtless gave verbal reports but was not required to record its activities. Fortunately one written report has been found in private papers, the only one known up to this period. It was apparently committed to paper by the chairman of the committee because he had so much to say, and he wanted to be sure that he said it all. It was read at the annual meeting of the trustees, and covers the school year of 1907-1908. A few town papers also are available which supplement this report. With the two sources it is possible to construct an outline of the situation at the time.

As the town was paying tuition to the school, and especially as it might soon be compelled to contribute further to its support if it were to survive, the town might reasonably wish to be represented on the board of trustees. No one recalls how much discussion there was at large, but the public suggestion for such representation seems to have been made by Professor Worthen at the town meeting of March, 1907. Although not a citizen of the town, he was frequently the spokesman of the trustees on academy matters.

There were several vacancies on the board, perhaps planned, and three men were nominated by the town with the expectation that the trustees would elect them. Dr. Leon B. Allen of Post Mills village, William F. Davis, the town treasurer, and Charles S. Wilmot, chairman of the town school board, were named, and were duly elected by the trustees for one, two, and three years, respectively. The plan was to elect one man each year thereafter, assuring the town of three representatives on the academy board, but providing for possible rotation.

Few details of the activities of this first group remain, but it is clear that they were expected to investigate

academy conditions and report to the town, which they did a year later, in the published annual town report of February, 1908. They had come into office at the right moment to see the tangle in which academy affairs were becoming involved. A summary of the combined reports of the chairman of the executive committee and the three-man town committee follows.

In the autumn of 1907 it had been necessary to seek a new principal. The trustees had discussed the idea of paying a salary rather than expecting a principal to depend largely upon the tuitions, but had deferred action. The executive committee report says,

We were left to take our own course as to the method of hiring a principal. We took the old method . . . of letting him make what he could out of the school. There was no money after debts were paid and repairs made, with which to guarantee a salary . . . so it was the old way or none . . . We hoped to get a Dartmouth man but Prof. Worthen said that available men were getting \$1800. The candidates simmered down to three and Charles A. Guild had the best recommendations, especially from his superintendent.

For some reason, possibly the attractive aspect of the village, or the fact that he would have free house rent, Mr. Guild chose Thetford, although he had other opportunities. He was an earnest, well educated man, but not very forceful. He had small children, their mother was in poor health, and the year proved to be a difficult one for him.

During his first term there was an unrecorded disturbance which was serious enough to cause the executive committee to send out a printed announcement:

To the Patrons of Thetford Academy. A crisis has come in the conduct of the school. It was determined by the trustees, that whatever else was, or was not, done, order and good discipline should be maintained this year. We regret to say that the subordinate teachers have not shown themselves capable of maintaining such a degree of discipline as seems to us necessary for the best good of the school, nor has their example been such in some respects, as we wish the scholars to follow.

The school was closed for a short time, and the winter term opened with new assistants, including Miss Mary

Colburn, who is often spoken of as one of the outstanding Thetford teachers of her generation. She had taught earlier under Mr. Bowdish, and it was said that she "saved the day" in this crisis.

William Slade, the executive committee chairman who gave the report, had been elected shortly before the beginning of Mr. Guild's year. He was a native of the Hill, but had been absent from the town for many years and had not been acquainted with details of the school affairs. He began his report with the words,

I am a sadder and a wiser man. Experience is a dear school. I have paid the tuition and bring you the result of my year in Thetford Academy.

He had found roofs in bad condition, part of the cellar needing repairs, chimneys filled with soot and creating a fire hazard, many broken window panes, and unprotected water pipes which froze easily. "The constant perplexity and bother of the water.....is enough to snap the patience of a saint." The sanitary arrangements were poor, the kitchen was in "bad shape". The chemical room under the academy building

is so damp that no valuable apparatus can be kept in it. How to remedy this is a serious problem the buildings are old. Repairing them is like putting water into a sieve. There is a constant demand for more conveniences Our young people have, at their homes, much better rooms, more comforts and luxuries, than when we went to school The outlook is discouraging, and the appearance of things to a man coming here as a teacher, is certainly far from inspiring.

Some of these conditions had been remedied during the year. But the fact remained that the trustees had on their hands an inconvenient, badly constructed, worn-out school house, and there seemed no way to remedy that. The dormitory was also greatly in need of repairs. The village and the school were rural, and somewhat primitive. Only a principal who understood rural life could cope with the conditions, or even discover and report some of them. In the matter of heating alone, the twenty-odd rooms of the dormitory had individual wood stoves. One unaccustomed to wood does not

realize how quickly chimneys become clogged with soot, which easily ignites. Cleaning chimneys is a regular chore in a wood-heated building and many have burned when the chore was neglected.

Mr. Childs has recalled in a letter that "many a time I climbed the stairs with an extinguisher in each hand to put out chimney fires." The report of the committee reveals that when they were burning out the chimneys to clear them, one was so full of soot that it burned slowly for three days, and a watchman had to be maintained. Kerosene lamps were a hazard also, and several fires had started from them. The care of the outhouses was demanding. In the absence of a nearby playground boys were always breaking windows with balls. With the self-boarding situation, rooms could become objectionable if they were not regularly inspected. One or more pigs were necessary to dispose of the garbage.

In justice to the trustees, it should be said that all were busy men, and whatever they did for the school was wholly a labor of love. Even the annual and special meetings occupied much time, and they could not always arrange their affairs and attend them. In bad weather long drives had to be taken in rain or snow, on mud or ice. Many of the problems which they must solve were foreign to their training and experience, and the problem of meeting the expenses of the school was increasingly critical. But the school was needed and they did not intend to allow it to die.

However, there was a bright side to the picture. The final law, assuring free high school education for all towns, had recently been passed and such matters as a minimum curriculum, length of school year, length of recitation period, and qualifications of teachers, were defined. The schedules and curriculums of the Thetford school had usually been substantially equal to the new requirements, and in some instances had exceeded them. At this time the length of the school year was thirty-six weeks, exceeding the minimum state requirement by three weeks. The recitation period was forty minutes, which was the maximum requirement of the

state. Thetford teachers had usually been efficient, except in a few short periods.

The new law went into effect on April 1, 1907, and Thetford Academy appears on a list of approved secondary schools, issued by the state at the end of the first year, April, 1908, and statistics are given. There were sixty different students and forty tuitions had been paid by the town. There were four teachers, seven graduates, and three were entering college, including one girl. The school now had a definite standing in the state, and to hold it, the level of state requirements must be steadfastly maintained. It could also now command still greater respect from the town.

Mr. Guild had carried the school through the year to a fairly successful conclusion, but his financial load had been too heavy and he resigned.

In the meantime the three-man committee, representing the town, had been studying the situation. In the Town Report at the end of their first year, February, 1908, corresponding roughly to the time of the executive committee report, they faced the problems squarely. Among other points they discussed the practice of turning the finances of the school over to the principal,

he hiring and paying his teachers and incidental expenses and lighting and heating the academy, and having what was left for his salary; fluctuating with the thermometer and the number of pupils he could get and keep. The cheaper he could run the school, the greater his salary.

In this discussion they include statistics which they had evidently secured from Mr. Guild, and which are here reduced to tabular form.

| Received by Guild. | Paid out |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| \$1320 from tuitions | \$ 900 three assistants |
| 300 " trustees | 375 their board & rooms |
| 534 " room rents | |
| <hr/> | <hr/> |
| \$2144 Total | \$1275 Total |

leaving \$869 from which Guild was to keep the buildings in as good repair as he found them, furnish light and fuel for the school buildings, and the remainder to be for

One hundred sixty-four

his salary. Added to these items would be the expense of moving his family to his next engagement.

It was the opinion of the three-man committee that

in order to conduct this school in a manner satisfactory to the town, the principal and teachers should be engaged and controlled by the executive committee, giving each a definite and reasonable salary, and holding each responsible to the executive committee.

This publicized opinion would be likely to compel the trustees to make a decision. They had considered the matter a year earlier and now, in May 1908, they voted "to provide instruction on a salary basis for one year," which should go into effect at the beginning of the fall term. But the town committee had further declared,

We believe that in order to obtain and retain a satisfactory principal, it will be necessary to pay more salary than can be obtained from the regular income of the school. If the school is to be kept up to the standard of the High Schools of the State, more money must be provided in some way, that the children of our town may receive equal advantages with those of other towns.

It should be borne in mind that there were no salaried men in the town except the clergymen, who were inadequately paid and were changing often, and possibly one or two superintendents of small mills. The wife of an officer of the board of trustees at the time stated that her husband had never earned more than \$600 a year. He was a carpenter, but he owned his "place." He could wear "over-alls" for work on week days, and a "Sunday suit" would last a long time. There were no costly automobiles to license and to keep in repair. A horse was supported largely from the land, and shoeing cost only \$1.25 "all around." A large garden, poultry, and a cow or two, were the rule for those who were not farmers.

A considerable proportion of the trustees lacked the experience which would enable them to understand the financial situation of a principal with a family, who had no "place", must dress well every day, must purchase nearly everything he used, and had the additional expense of moving often.

II

The first principal on the new "salary basis" was Charles E. Junkins, coming in the fall of 1908, whom they paid \$900. His two assistants, college women, were paid \$350 and \$300 respectively, and were given their room, their fuel, and also their board, which amounted to \$250 for the two. Fuel for the buildings was \$230. It will be recalled that students usually furnished their own fuel. Mr. Junkins was unmarried and the executive committee was fortunate in finding a matron who moved into the dormitory and boarded the teachers, and the few others who desired board, receiving her rent and whatever profit she could make. Other items, such as janitor, repairs, insurance, etc., brought expenditures to \$2444. The income was \$2000, leaving a deficit of \$444.

These facts were published in the town report of February, 1909, by the three-man committee at the end of their second year. After cordially approving of the manner in which the school had been conducted, they said,

. . . . in view of the deficit involved the past year and the improbability of meeting expenses in the immediate future, it seems probable that the school will have to be closed at the end of this year unless financial assistance comes from some direction. Believing that the future of Thetford Academy rests with the voters of Thetford and that Vox populi est Vox Dei, we submit this report to the voters of the town.

Mr. Junkins and his assistants had been so much concerned that they sent out a personal appeal for financial aid to the school. At some time during 1908 the Class of 1905 had contributed \$50 which is acknowledged by the trustees but does not appear on the treasurer's accounts.

The warning for the town meeting of March, 1909, which was to answer the above report, has the item ".....to see if the town will unite with the academy in maintaining a school." The town reports are usually faithfully studied by the voters, and with various circulars which had been sent out, the subject must have been thoroughly discussed before the meeting. A mo-

tion was made by an unidentified person that \$500 should be "*appropriated* in excess of tuition paid." It was so voted, and placed the question on a different basis than *uniting* "with the academy in maintaining a school." [The italics are the writer's.] The yeas and nays were not recorded.

The next year, in February, 1910, the three-man town committee announced in the town report that the average attendance had been forty, that it had been necessary to increase the salaries of the teachers, and that while conditions for maintaining a school were not ideal, they had been used to the best advantage, and they asked,

Is it for the advantage of the town to assist in maintaining this school for the benefit of such of our children as would be unable to attend elsewhere?

Again \$500 was appropriated, and a small legacy came at about this time, which was encouraging.

In 1910 the records first allude to the introduction of agriculture. William Slade had been reared on a Thetford farm, had been a student at the academy, partaking of the benefits of the Latham fund, and had graduated from Dartmouth, and from the Andover Theological Seminary. After holding pastorates in Massachusetts and Connecticut, he had come back to his native town as pastor of the Hill church.

He was a farmer at heart, and had become interested in the new idea of introducing agriculture into country schools. The scientific basis for farming had been steadily expanding through the experimental work of the Land Grant Colleges, which had been established under the Morrill Act of 1862. The day was passing when "anybody" could run a farm and use the same methods that his father and grandfather had used. Farming was becoming a profession, farming was the main industry of Thetford and the surrounding towns, and the academy had long ago become almost wholly a local school.

Mr. Slade talked and preached his convictions, and strengthened them by consulting state officials and educa-

tional experts, and submitting trial courses. Among letters was one from Dr. William J. Tucker, ex-president of Dartmouth, and a distinguished educator of his time, which was especially encouraging:

I am very much interested in the proposed plan for Thetford Academy. The time has come, I believe, for a change in our educational policy as affecting the relations of the country town and the city. The old-time New England Academy took pride in picking out the brightest scholars in the local community and in sending them through the colleges into the cities, and into the country at large. It was a most commendable and timely service

We ought to make the country communities better aware of their opportunities, and teach the young men and young women who are to remain at home that they can have the satisfactions which belong in common to all educated people. . . . I think also, that in their training, regard should be had to the average rather than to the exceptional student. In these days the exceptional student can find a place anywhere for self-development and for special training.

A letter from the current president of Dartmouth, Dr. Ernest F. Nichols, said,

The young people in our country towns in New England, must in some way be brought to realize the deeper significance and dignity of rural life and labor and they must have their intellectual, moral and spiritual resources so enriched by studies other than those directly applicable to agriculture, as to enable them to live a full, free and courageous life in solitary places In the courses offered, I believe you have struck an admirable balance between these two important interests.

In May, 1910, the trustees hesitatingly voted "that agriculture be introduced as far as is advantageous." At the same time they voted to buy the Goodwin property "as low as possible." This was the old Judge Buckingham place and consisted of eight acres of level meadow land. As hay was then a staple, it was expected that the meadow would be a good investment, whether used for agriculture or not. The house had burned, leaving a barn standing, which was soon to fill a humble but important place in the school plant by being used for basketball and other school activities.

It proved difficult to find a man who could serve in the capacity of principal and could also teach agriculture;

but George W. Paulsen, a recent graduate of the Massachusetts Agricultural College, was finally secured, and began work in the autumn of 1910. As a basic adjustment of the objectives of the school was beginning, although feebly, a brief comparison of his curriculum with that of his predecessor, Mr. Junkins, is given place.

Under Junkins (1909-1910) there had been three full courses and a supplementary teachers course, given below in a condensed form.

| CLASSICAL | | LATIN-SCIENTIFIC | |
|-----------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| 4 | years of Latin | 4 | years of English |
| 4 | " " English | 4 | " " Latin |
| 3 | " " Greek | 2 | " " German or French |
| 2 | " " Mathematics | 2 | " " Mathematics |
| | & senior review | | & senior review |
| 1 | " " Ancient History | 1 | " " Ancient History |
| 1 | " " Med. & Mod. History | 1 | " " Med. & Mod. History |
| | | 1 | " " Chemistry or Physics |
| ENGLISH | | TEACHERS COURSE | |
| 4 | years of English | History of Education | |
| 3 | " " German or French | Psychology | |
| 2 | " " Mathematics | School Management | |
| 1 | " " Ancient History | Principles & Practice | |
| 1 | " " Med. & Mod. History | | |
| 1 | " " Physics | | |
| 1 | " " Chemistry | | |
| 1 | " " Eng. & Amer. History | | |
| | or Civic and Commercial Law | | |

The next year, under Paulsen, there were but two courses, English and Agricultural, with no classical languages, and no special subjects for teachers. Both courses were duplicates of Junkins' English course of the preceding year, except that the Agricultural course slightly reduced the time for modern languages and added four years of agriculture. The three members of the faculty held degrees of B. S. only. It is significant that the school still kept its place on the state approved list, but agriculture was not mentioned in the statistics, possibly because of the lack of proper equipment. As one student was taking Latin, a member of the faculty must have been capable of teaching that subject.

The change from Junkins' courses to those of Paulsen was somewhat startling because it was so abrupt. But although extreme, it was following the general trend of educational practice. The colleges had been steadily moving away from insistence of the classics. There had been a Latin-Scientific course, without Greek, in Dartmouth for thirty years, and in 1902 Greek had been dropped from the list of requirements for a Bachelor of Arts degree. In colleges generally, the amount of science had steadily increased, and modern languages had been accepted as both cultural and practical.

No one has recalled who arranged the Paulsen courses. He certainly must have had a hand in them, and Slade, with his zeal for introducing agriculture, possibly was a co-author. In any case the changes must have been known, and perhaps approved, by the trustees or the executive committee. It seems to have been the custom for the principals to furnish the curriculums. They were often fresh from college and were familiar with college demands. A curriculum is not mentioned in any existing secretarial record during the school's first century except in 1905 when the school was about to be approved by the state. At that time Mr. Childs is recorded as submitting his to the trustees for approval.

The introduction of agriculture in secondary schools was still in a vaguely experimental stage, a statement which will be well illustrated by Thetford's experience. It is not generally recalled that the state had made an effort to introduce a text book on the subject to the common schools more than a half century earlier, and little notice was taken of the plan at the time.² But in 1910, the year which saw the introduction of it in Thetford Academy, it was again being discussed, and two years later the state offered a rebate of \$200 to towns maintaining an approved course. Private academies, however, would not be eligible to this aid.

Details of the Thetford course are given in Paulsen's prospectus, as follows:

garden, lawn and field cultivation; soils and their tillage; fruit and truck growing; diseases of plants; insects;

spraying; fertilizers; farm implements; marketing; animal husbandry; farm accounts, etc.

This practical course naturally emphasizes the leading occupation of the vicinity, and while it has been arranged to fit the pupil for efficient service in everyday life, it may readily be made to fit for the college or normal school. The course is, however, intended as a practical introduction to scientific agriculture.

Little is recalled concerning his administration of the school. Among his projects with the boys was building a model poultry house. He also made a large garden, hoping to furnish fresh vegetables for the nearby girls' camp, which was then in its infancy. Neither Paulsen nor the camp authorities realized that the climate of the Hill was not adapted to producing early vegetables in quantity, and apparently he was not warned by either trustees or residents. In his own words, the garden became a "white elephant".

III

In the meantime the town was recalling that 1911 would be the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of its charter. Significant changes were taking place. City families, attracted by the beauty of its scenery, were establishing modest summer homes. The era of summer camps for young people was beginning, and Camp Hanoum for girls had been opened on Thetford Hill in 1909. It was also a time of anniversaries and pageants in the region, as nearby towns had been chartered in the same decade. A celebration in Thetford was in order.

The promoters of the Thetford camp were Dr. and Mrs. Charles H. Farnsworth of Teachers College, Columbia University, who were connected with the town by family ties, and through their influence the Russell Sage Foundation of New York sent an experienced pageant master to Thetford to organize the celebration. A call for a general meeting was sent out by a group of men known as The Thetford Brotherhood, and in August, 1911, after more than six months of planning and preparation, a pageant was given on the river bank with a cast of five hundred, which was viewed by three thousand

people, and attracted the attention of the press throughout the country.

Although partly historical, the central theme was rural life, and its possibilities. It was supposed to be the first pageant in the country to present this subject and was declared by a critic to have been "a pageant in its purest and best form, the drama of a town, enacted with enthusiasm by young and old alike."³

The scene which portrayed the founding of the academy

contained more picturesque detail and old time dignity than any other episodes. The quaint tea party and beautiful costuming of the ladies and gentlemen, . . . the young lawyer, Simeon Short, riding in on horseback from Meriden, full of his new scheme for a school, the homage to Dr. Burton, the beloved pastor, the signing of the subscription papers, the unexpected entrance of Amasa Bond with a pair of oxen, dragging in triumph the first log of the new academy, the introduction of Senator Morrill as a small boy driving up in an old country wagon⁴

were vivid reminders of life in early nineteenth century days.

Through this celebration came contacts with the state and federal departments of agriculture, and visits from soil, fruit, cow-testing, and farm management experts, and the State Forester. The president of the pageant committee, Arthur B. Palmer, whose energy and good judgment contributed greatly to the success of the celebration, was a farmer, and forester. He was also a trustee of the academy.

That this undertaking exerted an influence on the fortunes of the school cannot be doubted. The town is made up of six small villages, separated by heights of land, and these villages do not always see eye to eye. But in the end they worked together enthusiastically, although with some difficulty at first. The affair was such a success that the town gained new confidence in itself. It had accomplished something large, something which was artistic both in form and in presentation, and for which it had received publicity and praise. It had also heard much about new ideas in education, in agriculture, and the possibilities of rural life. And in the

unfolding of the theme of the drama, the academy appeared as an important element in the development of the town, both in the past and for the future.

IV

There is in use at the time of this writing the term, Social Studies, which probably was not employed by any principal of Thetford Academy during its first century.⁵ The term speaks for itself. Some of us had our earliest introduction to its meaning at our grandmother's knee, although the term was not coined for many years. Grandmother told of life when she was young, of the homes, the schools, the churches, and how people made a living. Instead of being largely a matter of dates, administrations, and battles, history had gradually become a Social Study, which dealt with real people, what they did, why, and how. Economics, known in earlier days as Political Economy, was also becoming a Social Study, and included the manner of making a living, and the place of the farmer in the economic world.

One of the principles underlying this new classification of subjects was that

The curriculum which best serves society is one which reflects not only the objectives and ideals but also the needs of that society.⁶

Throughout its history the school had clung to the ideals of the community and had only partially realized its needs. But the effort to respond to those needs in 1910 was premature. Neither the community nor the board of trustees was ready to accept the mundane, everyday subject of agriculture. There was little understanding of the fact that equipment was needed to teach the new subject, and if there had been, there was little money for it. Also parents were inclined to desire "white collar" jobs for their sons, and Mr. Paulsen became discouraged and left in the Spring of 1912. Writing thirty years later, after a successful career as principal of a large suburban school, he said

I was inexperienced as a teacher, certainly lacking in the experience needed to put the Academy on its feet, as was probably expected of me However, I was 'dyed in the wool' agriculturally.

In order to avoid interruption of the last term of the year, Mr. Slade was immediately put in charge of the school, although he was already preaching in the Hill and North Thetford village churches. His experience in teaching was slight and in the emergency he expected to carry the school only through the few weeks to commencement. But, giving up the North Thetford church, he continued as principal for five years.

He restored the discarded third course and now offered English, Scientific, and College Preparatory courses, the latter course having four years of Latin and two years of German, but no Greek. All courses gave four years of English including American and English Literature. His assistants were capable, both holding A. B. degrees.

He, however, did not give up agriculture entirely. All students had one term of it, which, his prospectus states,

is studied as the fundamental vocation It is studied that our young people may understand and honor the work going on around them.

He used the latest text book for secondary schools, which presented the subject "very largely in a nature-study spirit" and, as recommended in the preface, employing the "open book method of teaching, now used successfully in many schools."⁷ The custom of calling a farmer a "hayseed" had not yet passed, nor was farming generally recognized as "the fundamental vocation."

Feeling that home-making should be considered a skilled occupation, he also formed a class in that subject which he put in the care of his wife, although she had no special training. There was no equipment, but a text book was used,⁸ with weekly home projects, and occasional talks were given by successful home-makers of the community. This was the earliest effort to demonstrate the desirability of home-making as a subject for the Thetford school. One of the projects was a luncheon given to the trustees on the day of their annual meeting, which so impressed the board as to cause a vote of appreciation to be inscribed in their records.

Also the whole school was exposed to music by modern methods, again in charge of Mrs. Slade, who had qualifications for this subject. Music in the school had suffered a relapse since the days of Solon Smith and George Worcester. Meanwhile, following the new ideas of pedagogy, methods had changed. As reading now came before spelling, so singing came before notation. Replacing the old cabinet organ, a secondhand square piano was purchased for \$35, which did duty for accompaniments and for student use during recesses. This was the first piano owned by the school.

Music was not yet given as a subject in the common schools of the town, except as an occasional teacher was capable of teaching songs. Radios were unknown and victrolas scarcely known. At this time an academy boy came to the teacher and said with evident satisfaction, "I never knew before what those black dots on lines meant." Another boy, who lived on an isolated farm, insisted that he did not know a single tune, not even America, nor The Star Spangled Banner. The musical training soon proved useful. In 1914 there was but one graduate and time was filled on the commencement program with a short cantata for girls' voices. Unaccustomed to singing, the boys were too self-conscious to accomplish much at first, but they appeared on the commencement program of 1915 with a song in unison. It should be recalled that students were younger and less mature than in the years of Orcutt and Turner.

The 1914 program for the one-girl graduate included an address by Professor Charles H. Farnsworth, whose subject was The Value of the Beautiful. The custom of having speakers from outside had evidently developed from an earlier one of having an address by a trustee, when Professor Worthen, and the various pastors of the Hill church, who were usually trustees, were called upon. It is recalled that sometime in the 1880s, President Samuel C. Bartlett of Dartmouth appeared on a program. In 1908 President Matthew H. Buckham of the University of Vermont was the speaker. Mason S. Stone, Vermont Superintendent of Education, spoke in 1907.

The annual presence of Professor Farnsworth on the Hill as a summer resident was responsible for the occasional appearance of Columbia Teachers College colleagues. Thus Professor George D. Strayer, professor of Education Administration, was on the 1913 program. The subjects were seldom announced, but the 1915 program indicates that Professor Herbert D. Foster of Dartmouth spoke of Permanent Influences in New England Life. These addresses contributed to the culture and intelligence of the village and the town, as had the lectures and lyceums of earlier days.

During Slade's earliest years his first assistant was Miss Charlotte Hull, inherited from Paulsen and Junkins, who for six years did outstanding work in the school as a friend and guide to the girls. But there were many perplexing problems. The town was faithfully continuing its aid, but controversial situations and the discontinuance of preparatory classes had affected attendance. In 1911 there had been but thirty-three students, and besides the 1914 class of one, the class of 1913 was reduced to two girls.

The atmosphere cleared somewhat, however, and both 1915 and 1916 saw a class of eight graduate. Of the five boys and three girls in 1916, four were graduated from college, three of whom went on to postgraduate work at Middlebury, Cornell, and Harvard, and the fourth, a girl, graduated from Skidmore and added secretarial and kindergarten courses to her A. B. degree. Of the remaining four, two boys took advanced business and industrial courses, and one girl took an architectural course and became an architect's assistant. The remaining girl married soon and had an honorable career as a housewife and mother, and community member.

CHAPTER 8—REFERENCES

¹Stone, op. cit., p. 231.

²Ibid., p. 236.

³*The Outlook*, Sept. 30, 1911, *The Spectator*.

⁴*The Vermonter*, Mar. 1912.

⁵Wesley, Edgar Bruce, *Teaching the Social Studies*, p. 7.

⁶Ibid., p. 30.

⁷Mann, Albert Russell, *Beginnings in Agriculture*, 1912.

⁸Kinne, Helen, and Anna M. Cooley, *Foods and Household Management*, 1914.



Chapter IX

1907-1919, Continued

I

BUT DESPITE THE problems which were besetting the school, the surrounding atmosphere had been slightly encouraging and certainly was stimulating. In 1912 Vermont had taken a progressive step, by which a commission was appointed to "enquire into the entire educational system and condition of this state." This commission arranged for a survey and secured Dr. Henry S. Pritchett, President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and ex-president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, to direct it, with such assistance as he chose.

Accordingly Dr. Pritchett welded ten of the ablest available specialists into an investigating body which attacked its problems with great zeal.¹

The report of the Commission, issued two years later, declared that

The present enquiry represents the first comprehensive effort on the part of a state of the Union to study its school system as a whole, from the elementary school to the University.²

The enquiry was undertaken to answer certain questions, namely, "What is the system of schools trying to do? What are its limitations? What are its possibilities?"³ Huden, writing in 1944, said, "The Carnegie Survey always will remain the classic prototype of state educational investigations."⁴

As a matter of fact, many of the recommendations of the survey had been made by different state supervisors from the time of the earliest one, appointed in 1845. But as Huden quotes, "A prophet is not without honor save in his own country." Now the suggestions came

from outside experts, and the state was also more aware of its needs.

Underlying the complex situation of recent years, the idea of transferring the administration of the academy to the town had been slowly taking shape, especially since the activities of the three-man committee. A brief review of the gradual appearance of the town high school in the state will be helpful in understanding the situation at the time of the Carnegie Survey, keeping in mind that the term *academy* was not an exact one. It was loosely applied to schools outside of state control, and sometimes even to small one-teacher schools which held a few classes in advanced subjects. The following statistics are based upon Stone's history.

1. Early secondary education was confined to academies and other private schools which had little uniformity and no connection with the state.
2. In 1857 the state school report announced that there were between 70 and 80 academies and 49 "select schools", but no high schools were listed.
3. In 1867 towns were authorized to maintain a central school "for the education of advanced pupils of the several districts", but tuition was expected.
4. In 1880 there were 34 high schools and 69 academies.
5. In 1894 towns of 2500 inhabitants, or more, were directed by law to maintain a high school if there was no academy in the town.
6. In 1906 *all* towns were directed to provide advanced instruction, either by maintaining a school, or by paying tuition.
7. In 1910 many of the academies had been transformed into town high schools. There were then 70 high schools and but 20 academies.

Thetford, of course, was well aware of the changes, and also of the Carnegie Survey. The latter was primarily concerned with the state system, but private academies received a share of attention. Concerning them, it was the opinion of the Survey that

Education in the world without is so rapidly and so fundamentally changing its aims and methods, that the cherished institutions of these smaller towns are now, and in their present form must always be, hopelessly in arrears.⁵

The survey staff felt strongly that Thetford Academy should be transferred to the town.

Another factor in shaping the policies of both town and trustees at this time was doubtless the matter of state aid. Vermont had gradually built up a School Fund, but had aided only the common schools. In 1912 the fund had been enlarged by various means and had been apportioned more equitably, now including "advanced instruction." By this new law, towns which expended 50%, or more, of their grand list on schools, were entitled to a graded rebate from the fund.⁶ Thetford expended 72% of her grand list, or more than \$4000, in the year 1914 and the town not only received a generous rebate for the expense of its common schools, but also for about one half of the tuition it had paid to the academy.⁷ This made it easier for the town to aid the school, and might affect the matter of taking the entire responsibility for it.

In view, therefore, of educational progress in the state, and of increasing awareness of the precarious condition of academy affairs, together with the pressure of the Carnegie Survey, it is not surprising that both town and academy officials were aroused to action. It must be remembered that nearly all the trustees and the students were now residents of the town or had reason to be interested in its fortunes. Records show that the first formal move for transferring the school to the town came from the town itself. The matter is not mentioned in the warning for the town meeting of March, 1915, but the report of the meeting contains the following brief item:

Moved—That the school directors be instructed and empowered to act in the matter of taking over Thetford Academy as a town high school.

It was evidently so voted and must have been the result of prolonged discussion.

It is sometimes difficult for those who live outside of New England to realize how completely the New England town, even the smallest one, is an "intrenched republic." The town meeting is the place where all

the voters may "speak their mind", and discussions are often heated and prolonged. That fact must be read into this calm and condensed account of the relation of Thetford Academy to the town. Stone says with equal calmness and condensation, "Free advanced instruction was not readily secured in Vermont, but the town meeting discussions encouraged the acceptance of the principle. . ."⁸

A detailed proposal from the town school directors soon followed the town meeting. Upon its receipt the trustees held a special meeting in April, 1915, and a committee was chosen to investigate the situation and to "employ council." This committee was carefully chosen. It was composed of Charles P. Chase, a former principal of the academy and now treasurer of Dartmouth College, who would be likely to consider the financial aspect of the proposal; Professor Worthen, a native of Thetford, to whom the educational aspect would have special significance; and Arthur B. Palmer, a resident of Thetford, who would be interested in the question from the standpoint of both the town and the trustees.

There is no record of the report of this committee to the trustees, which they undoubtedly made, either formally or informally. But the next town report, almost a year later, gives the text of the proposal from the town, and a paragraph was added which indicated that it was rejected by the trustees. The proposal follows in a slightly abridged form.⁹

Report of School Directors for Year ending June 30, 1915

The School Board begs leave to submit that, according to instructions at the annual Town Meeting in March, 1915, they attempted to make arrangements to take over the control of the institution by making a contract with the trustees of Thetford Academy The proposition was

- 1st. The institution shall be known as Thetford Academy and Town High School.
- 2nd. The agreement shall be for five years, unless the town votes to discontinue the high school or a majority of the trustees vote to again take control. If the town decides to discontinue the school, it shall be surrendered without recompense for repairs and alterations made. If the trustees decide to take it back, they shall give two years' notice, and shall re-

compense the town for two thirds the amount expended on repairs and alterations. Any transfer to be made at close of a school year.

- 3rd. Income from Academy funds to be turned over to the town treasurer as soon as received, and a list of investments, income (etc.) to be filed with the town treasurer.
- 4th. The School Board shall maintain the institution as directed by the voters in town meeting and subject to the requirements of the State Board of Education to constitute a high school.
- 5th. Repairs or alterations to be subject to the approval of a majority of a committee of the trustees.
- 6th. Agreement to take effect July 1, 1915.

We were to learn the decision of the Trustees by June 15, 1915. We have never received any official communication from the trustees, but from an article in a local newspaper we assume that the proposal was rejected, and that the institution will be controlled under the same management as in the past.

This situation would hardly be conducive to a cordial relation with the School Board.

Interviewed nearly four decades later, the few who were able to recall the discussions reported that the clause "as directed by the voters in town meeting" was not acceptable to the trustees. Letters also show that they had recognized the probability that the income from academy funds could not safely be passed over to the town without resort to the courts. There were doubtless other reasons for rejecting the proposal.

In the meantime the state had accepted the main recommendations of the Carnegie Survey and had incorporated them into law in 1915; and in 1916 Milo B. Hillegas became the new State Commissioner of Education. Dr. Hillegas was professor of Education in Teachers College, Columbia University, and had been a member of the staff which made the survey. He had secured a five-year leave of absence from the College and "vigorously attacked the problem of reorganizing Vermont's educational affairs."¹⁰ The academy trustees were soon making plans to consult him about courses, and the continued cooperation of the state. Professor Worthen, William Slade, Professor Charles H. Farnsworth, and

Leland E. Tupper were chosen as a committee for the purpose. Professor Farnsworth had been elected a trustee in 1914. Mr. Tupper was pastor of the Post Mills church and had been nominated by the town in 1915 and duly elected a trustee.

II

Feeling unable to continue the double burden of church and school, Mr. Slade resigned as principal in 1917 and was absent from the town for several years. He was succeeded by Mr. Tupper. Both agriculture and home-making were dropped, and music was discontinued as a recognized subject. Home-making, however, was resumed the second year, 1918-1919, under the care of Miss Elizabeth Hawley, who was the first qualified teacher of the subject in the school, having had the training of the time in the Framingham, Mass., Normal School. Buying supplies, cooking, planning menus, and sewing, were now included under the new title, Home Economics, and the dormitory kitchen was the laboratory. There were but seventeen girls in the school during the first term and all but two elected the subject. Two boys were regretfully refused admission, but it is reported that they were able to help in various ways.

Each girl contributed \$2 each school week, or its equivalent in supplies, and a group of girls in rotation and under the teacher's supervision, prepared each meal for five days a week, serving seventeen, including two teachers, who paid for their board. Some of the dishes were borrowed from neighbors, and such supplies as were purchased came from the small local grocery store, and the itinerant "butcher." Wood was the fuel, often green and difficult to burn, and Miss Hawley rose at 6:30 in the morning to "get things started." Her text was *Feeding the Family*, by Mary Swartz Rose, an up-to-date book, especially giving consideration to the factors of a balanced diet in the light of recent discoveries. Besides this course, she taught Civil Government and General Science.¹¹

The latter subject was the latest solution to the problem brought about by the expansion and division of the

sciences. It presented in one course the basic principles of several sciences, chiefly physics, chemistry and biology. It was practical, and especially suitable for those students who would not go on to more advanced schools. The Carnegie Report called it "a new and promising course."¹²

Miss Hawley left at the end of the year, but precedents had been established and after some interruptions Home Economics and Agriculture were to become strong courses in the school, and music a regular activity. Miss Hawley's salary had been \$1000. It has been impossible to determine the salary of the principal for this last year of the school's first century. The income for the calendar year of 1919 was about \$4200, coming from tuitions, room rents, investments, Grammar School lands, hay, rent of the dormitory in the summer, donations, and minor sources. By 1925 the principal was receiving \$1800.

The end of the school's century saw the installation of electric lights in the winter of 1918-1919, which considerably reduced the fire hazard in the buildings. They were supplied by a local project, utilizing the water power at Thetford Center, a mile and a half away. The bulbs of the day were of plain glass and hung from the ceiling, giving only central light. A local telephone line also ran over the Hill but was installed only in the store at first. Individual "phones" came slowly and were considered a luxury. With the gradual appearance of automobiles Thetford Hill became "modern", and transportation of students was soon to be a very different matter.

III

A second proposition for transference of the school to the town was made in 1918, this time coming from the trustees.

The Carnegie Survey had pointed out that although the Vermont constitution had declared that "a sovereign duty of the commonwealth to all its youth (is that) schools must be competent in number and in instruction",¹³ yet the state had failed to adapt the schools to changing conditions. This lack of adaptation appeared most

prominently in the secondary schools, which existed largely for about one tenth of the youth of secondary school age, who were preparing for higher education, and served only slightly the remaining nine tenths, who should be provided with some vocational training.¹⁴

“To restore the secondary schools to their rightful place” the commission recommended two types of secondary schools; a junior high school made up of the 7th and 8th grades of the elementary schools and the first two years of the high school; also a central and “readily accessible senior high school articulating directly with all the neighboring junior high schools.”¹⁵

The junior high schools should have a four-year curriculum “elastic in administration”,¹⁶ and appropriate to the local boys and girls twelve to sixteen years of age. An advantage of this arrangement would be the separation of the younger pupils from the older adolescents; another would be that the teachers of the elementary schools would be relieved of the 7th and 8th grades.

The senior high schools should have a four-year curriculum with some special vocational opportunities, particularly in agriculture; and also an additional two-year curriculum appropriate to youths of seventeen to nineteen years of age, drawn from the surrounding districts, who were fitting for college, or were completing a course of general education. These last senior years should make available “high grade courses in agriculture, together with courses in manual training, commercial subjects, and domestic science.”¹⁷ These senior high schools of six years became known as junior-senior high schools.

It was the opinion of the Survey that instruction should be

of that character to educate the youth toward the occupation of the communities in which they live¹⁸ The teaching of agriculture is of such surpassing importance to the welfare of Vermont, that a defense of it is unnecessary¹⁹ That human being is educated who has been so trained as to make the best out of the place in life in which he finds himself, taking into account his full capacity spiritual, intellectual, economic. Education is therefore a relative, not an absolute term.²⁰

The response of the legislature in 1915 had been to recommend the two types of schools, subject to the approval of the school directors of the individual towns. Seven towns established junior high schools at once, and the next year, 1916, four junior-senior schools were organized, one being in Thetford's neighboring town, Bradford.²¹ Huden says that the experiment "commanded nation-wide attention",²² and Stone's opinion was that Vermont was "the first state to provide legally for schools of this character."²³ One of the earliest and most successful was established at Cabot by a former Thetford student, Ralph Mayo of Lyme.²⁴ He was one of those who, from time to time, had found it necessary to transfer from Thetford to another school in the midst of his college preparatory course because the academy was not in good working order.

The plan for the junior-senior school presented difficulties where towns were predominantly rural, as in Vermont, one being transportation in the days before the school "bus". War conditions at the time were also reducing the supply of qualified teachers and principals. But the main difficulty lay in accustoming the people to certain aspects of the plan, and criticism was sometimes severe, especially of the emphasis on agriculture. One town supervisor felt that the survey tended toward "setting up of a definite peasant class in Vermont."²⁵ A clergyman said "Put in the Junior High School scheme and your only culture will be agri-culture."²⁶

That the junior-senior plan was discussed extensively in Thetford is evident, and it is known that the academy trustees investigated the Bradford school. Although the subject does not appear in the warning for the annual town meeting of March, 1918, a resolution was adopted at the meeting

that it is the mind of this meeting that if they can do so on terms satisfactory to themselves, the School Directors of the Town should take over Thetford Academy for the purpose of organizing it into a Junior-Senior High School for the education of the town's pupils.

A meeting of the trustees was soon called at the request of Mr. Tupper

to discuss the matter of changing the Academy into a Junior & Senior High School. Eight of the trustees appeared & all seemed in favor of making the change. It was voted to leave the matter of drawing plans to the Executive Committee & School Board.

As a matter of fact, the effect of the general policies of the school had been suggestive of the junior-senior plan throughout much of its history. While it had emphasized college preparation, elementary subjects had necessarily been given, resulting in the equivalent of five, and often six, grades; and a few subjects which might be called vocational had been introduced, probably because they were demanded, or because an individual teacher was able to teach them. Book-keeping and surveying seem to have been the earliest, with courses for teachers soon following. Later were the business and telegraphy courses.

There had been no problem of transportation, as that had been solved by parents and neighbors with horse and wagon; or many students had, themselves, driven daily to the Hill and kept their horses in the barns of the village, which were then plentiful. Some of these early commuters lived five miles away, and all had the slow journey up the steep hill to the village. Also, as we have seen, many spent the school week on the Hill. But no thought seems to have been given to the two vocations nearest to the daily life of the students until the Paulsen-Slade period, and now in 1917-1918, they had temporarily vanished.

In June, 1918, Mr. Tupper's first year as principal was closing. He believed that the school must be transferred to the town, and students of his time recall that he often expressed his convictions. They were so impressed that the valedictorian of the class of that year chose for her subject, "The Academy—Has It Passed?" Her final words to her audience were

The old order changeth—and the word of authority has gone forth that the Academy, without endowment or other income sufficient to enable it to keep up the standard, must go. . . . We bid farewell to our school days with anxious hearts. Shall our farewell be a valedictory indeed, or will other classes continue for another hundred years to make the

Academy a stepping stone to higher things? It is for you to say.²⁷

Commencement audiences were always large and representative, and the appeal reached many ears.

IV

The plan, as finally evolved, ignored the term, junior, and provided that the school was

to be known as Thetford Academy and Town High School which shall be the equivalent of the Academy. The same being more definitely defined as a High School which shall be approved as such by the Board of Education, or its successor, of the State of Vermont the said contract shall be binding so long as the said High School shall be maintained.

The contract was to be for "the purpose of promoting the educational interests of Thetford and the vicinity." The town was to keep the buildings in good repair and insured for a reasonable amount. Plans were suggested for arbitration in case of "differences." The income of funds was to be passed over to the town as soon as received.

A statement of property and its estimated value as of May 1, 1919 was given.

| | | |
|--|----------|-----------|
| Academy Building..... | \$ 3,000 | |
| Academy Boarding House..... | 7,000 | |
| Slafter House | 1,500 | |
| Water Supply..... | 1,500 | |
| Goodwin Lot..... | 800 | |
| | <hr/> | \$ 13,800 |
| Latham Fund, invested in reliable stocks and bonds..... | | 5,000 |
| General Fund, invested likewise, and in mortgages | | 14,000 |
| | | <hr/> |
| | | \$ 32,800 |

Besides this list they added the Hood legacy, which they had not yet received, calling it \$20,000. The income was still being paid to Mr. Hood's relatives.

This proposal was published and circulated throughout the town. The trustees' investment committee at the time, composed of Charles P. Chase, Professor Worthen, and Clinton O. Andrews, was an efficient one.

One hundred eighty-nine

The latter was Mr. Hood's successor as treasurer of the Lawrence bank, who had kindly taken Hood's place upon the committee. He had been made a trustee and his letters indicate his interest in the welfare of the school, although as far as known, he never came to Thetford.

Few of the actual arguments of either the town or the trustees are recalled in 1950. Dr. Hillegas urged the trustees to transfer the school, and he personally came to Thetford to argue his case on at least two occasions. The inadequate income, and weariness from the constant worry and uncertainty, might conceivably influence the trustees also. On the side of the town would be the influence of Dr. Hillegas, and the feeling by some that if they must contribute liberally to the support of the school, they might as well administer it.

But both sides doubtless realized that the charter might be forfeited; that personal contributions to a town school could hardly be expected; that lawsuits might result from those who had contributed in the past. And many doubtless saw that the problems would not be lessened, but would only be transferred from one side to the other; and lastly, but by no means least, there would be the loss of individuality and the freedom to experiment. No trace remains of a plan to safely transfer the income of the funds.

In response to the proposition, the warning for the annual town meeting of March, 1919, contained the item, "To discuss the future welfare of Thetford Academy and take any action thought best." Interest in the question had been stimulated by the fact that 1919 was the centennial year of the school, and a celebration had been planned to take place in June, shortly after the close of the school year. It was evident that the subject would be thoroughly discussed by the alumni at this meeting, and the town wisely postponed a decision until after it had taken place. A special town meeting was therefore planned to be held soon after the alumni meeting.

The June commencement program is said to have been based on the situation. But sometimes a straw helps to show which way the wind is really blowing. Mr. Tupper not only believed that the school should be passed to

the town, but also believed that it would be. In his address to the class of the year he was premature, when he said that it would probably be the last one to graduate from the institution as an academy.

This emphasized to both sides the true state of affairs, and brought forth an unsigned article in a local paper, in which Mr. Tupper was advised to abstain from prophesying, "lest the results confound the prophet."²⁸

V

June 27th, the day of the centennial reunion, "was ushered in by one of the worst storms of the season", but while some were prevented from coming, "there were many who were too much interested to be kept away by any weather conditions." The attendance is reported as "a large company." Dr. Bicknell, the president of the Alumni Association, presided and was hailed as the oldest living graduate, having been a member of the Class of 1853. Reunions and a brief meeting for organization were held in the academy hall in the morning; dinner and speaking took place in a tent, after which large afternoon and evening meetings were held in the church. The theme of the evening meeting was modern education.

Special music was furnished throughout the day by Miss Helen Latham, a grand-daughter of Captain Latham, and a member of the faculty of Teachers College, Columbia University; and community singing was led by Dr. Farnsworth, aided by Ray Palmer of Thetford and his cornet. The main features of the day were published and take their place beside the valuable account of the reunion of 1894. But as the reports were not stenographic, they are incomplete.

Brief quotations from a few of the speakers will reveal the direction of their thought regarding the school. Naturally some history and reminiscence were introduced. Dr. Bicknell confined himself largely to the Orcutt period, which he knew best.

I entered Thetford Academy in the spring of 1850. I found myself associated with students from half the states of the union, many of whom were men and women grown. I found among them many who had caught the spirit of a

new age and were fitting themselves to take their share of its work and its honors. Many men had ambitions for college and professional life; many women were fitting for teaching and missionary service, home and foreign. These made and controlled the standards of study and regime for the whole school.

George Worcester, speaking of the service of the school to the state and nation, and referring to the remarkable record of the first seventy-five years, said, "I began to wonder what these latter days would show in comparison." Beginning with 1886, he found that in the thirty-three years 245 had graduated. Of these, forty-five boys and thirty-four girls had gone on to higher institutions, which was a much higher percentage than "in the good old days." In the professions he found eminent doctors, lawyers, and college professors, besides many school superintendents and principals with ability of a high order. He closed by saying,

"if we can have your hearty support, the century on which we are just entering will show even greater results than that just closed."

William Slade's address on the history of the school is not reproduced, but his conclusions in regard to it are given under the title, *The Academy Ideal*, in which he said,

There is the element of freedom in the method of teaching which is not possible in the systematized high school, necessarily systematized and confined because a large number are to be managed and cultured at the least cost and in the shortest time. . . . The old academy has emphasized what it could not always carry out, the fact that the personality and character of the teacher were of supreme importance in education.

He had been impressed by the fact that in all the addresses and in private conversations at the reunion, there was "a pervasive atmosphere and continuous conviction" that

The Academy Ideal has proved its worth by a century of success in spite of a thousand obstacles and difficulties. It must and shall be preserved.

Marshall B. Cummings, born and reared in Thetford, was a graduate of the school, and was an educator, being a member of the faculty of the Agricultural College of the University of Vermont. He was therefore

qualified to discuss the usefulness and destiny of the school. Professor Cummings said:

This Centennial seems to mark a turning point for the Academy. A census of opinion here and now, seems to be, that the institution must not be allowed to decline, it must go on and must meet the needs of today, just as it met the needs of yesterday If the town will assume its full share of responsibility, financial and otherwise, it may properly ask, in addition to the usual courses of study, that some attention be given to the home life, the industries and the professions of the people of the town The teaching of agriculture is no longer an experiment It is now being taught in 30 schools in Vermont.

Professor Worthen, introduced as the best friend that the academy ever had, said,

Thetford Academy, or an equivalent, is absolutely necessary for the welfare and progress of this community This town has held its own beyond that of many small towns by reason of the old academy, which, though feebly at times, has still kept the torch of education burning This is a most important time in the life of the school. The state authorities, the town as a whole, and the trustees, are now joining in a most earnest effort to place it on a broader and firmer foundation, and all are bound together in carrying out whatever conclusion may be reached.

VI

The warning for the special town meeting, which was to decide the fate of the academy, gave an opportunity for a full discussion of the subject:

Art. 1. To see what action, if any, the town will take on the proposition of the Trustees of Thetford Academy; That the town take over said Academy for a Town High School.

Art. 2. To see what other action, if any, the Town will take in regard to Thetford Academy as a Senior or Junior High School.

At the meeting, on July 1st, Professor Worthen was asked to speak. Whatever he said would be sure to have weight. The superintendent of the town schools, Merle H. Willis, also spoke. No record has been preserved of their words, or of other speakers. But both

articles of the warning were passed over, and an appropriation of \$1000, in excess of tuitions, was voted for the ensuing year, and \$500 annually for the next four years, or until the Hood bequest was available, if within five years. The trustees were reasonably asked to report to the town each year, and to conform to the requirements of the State Board of Education. The school, however, remained a private one, with full control of its own resources; and the town, now with a population of less than 1200, was loyally standing by, as a parent to a child.

The editor of the "Proceedings of the Centennial" wrote,

The spirit of the town meeting was very friendly to the academy, and the desire was manifested to take the action that would work out for the best interests of the school and the young people of the town.

A precedent had been established which was to be followed indefinitely.



THUS WAS THE FIRST CENTURY OF THETFORD ACADEMY
ENDED AND A NEW ONE BEGUN.

One hundred ninety-four

CHAPTER 9—REFERENCES

- ¹Huden, John C., *Development of State School Administration in Vermont*, p. 195.
- ²Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Bulletin No. 7. *A Study of Education in Vermont*, p. 5.
- ³Ibid.
- ⁴Huden; op. cit., p. 209.
- ⁵Carnegie Bulletin; op. cit., p. 97.
- ⁶Stone; op. cit., p. 99.
- ⁷Thetford Town Report for year ending Jan. 31, 1916.
- ⁸Stone; op. cit., p. 230.
- ⁹Town Report for year ending Jan. 31, 1918.
- ¹⁰Huden; op. cit., p. 195.
- ¹¹Interview with Mrs. Ray Palmer, formerly Miss Hawley.
- ¹²Carnegie Bulletin, op. cit., p. 102.
- ¹³Vermont School Report, Jan. 1915, containing a summary of the Carnegie Bulletin, p. 9.
- ¹⁴Ibid., p. 10.
- ¹⁵Ibid.
- ¹⁶Ibid.
- ¹⁷Ibid., p. 11.
- ¹⁸Ibid., p. 4.
- ¹⁹Carnegie Bulletin, p. 89.
- ²⁰Ibid., p. 9.
- ²¹Stone; op. cit., p. 233.
- ²²Huden; op. cit., p. 91.
- ²³Stone; op. cit., p. 233.
- ²⁴*The Vermonter*, Feb. 1917.
- ²⁵Huden, John C., *Vermont Junior High Schools*. Master's Essay, Yale University, 1935, Ms., p. 94.
- ²⁶Ibid., p. 205.
- ²⁷Hanover, (N. H.,) Gazette, June 20, 1918.
- ²⁸Ibid., June 19, 1919.

APPENDIXES

I

THETFORD ACADEMY CHARTER

An act establishing an Academy in Thetford in the County of Orange.

- SEC. I. It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont that there be and hereby is constituted and established an Academy in the town of Thetford in the county of Orange at the place where the building erected for that purpose now stands, to be known and designated by the name of Thetford Academy.
- SEC. II. It is hereby further enacted that the Rev. Doct. Asa Burton, Jedidiah P. Buckingham, Joseph Reed, William Heaton, Lyman Fitch, Thomas Kendrick, Simeon Short, Elijah Hammond, T. P. Bartholomew with their associates and successors be constituted and appointed a body politic and corporate to all intents and purposes both in name and fact with all the rights, powers and privileges belonging to similar institutions, to be known by the name of the Trustees of Thetford Academy.
- SEC. III. And it is hereby further enacted that the said corporation may have a common seal, and the same alter at pleasure, that they may sue and be sued, may prosecute and defend in all suits and actions, may make their own laws, rules and regulations, not repugnant to the constitution and laws of this State, for the regulation of said Academy, may take and hold by grant, gift, purchase or otherwise any estate, personal or real, to the amount of ten thousand dollars for the benefit of said corporation.
- SEC. IV. And it is hereby further enacted, that the persons named in the second section of this act, may add to their number until the whole of the members of the corporation shall not exceed fifteen, and the said corporation may supply any vacancies which may happen by death, resignation or otherwise of any of the members of said corporation at any meeting of said corporation warned and holden according to any rules which may be established. And that the Rev. Doctor Burton, Joseph Reed and Thomas Kendrick, or either two of them are hereby authorized to warn the first meeting of said corporation at any convenient time and place within three months from the rising of this Legislature for the purpose of transacting proper business, making rules and regulations, choosing officers and appointing times of annual meetings for the benefit of said corporation and that any seven of the members of said corporation shall constitute a quorum.

SEC. V. And it is hereby further enacted that all real and personal estate of said corporation held for the benefit of said Academy shall be free and forever exempted from all taxes.

STATE OF VERMONT SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE
MONTPELIER, NOV. 5, 1819

I, William Slade Jun., Secretary of the State of Vermont, do certify that the foregoing is a true copy of an act passed by the Legislature of this State on the 29th of October, A. D. 1819 as appears by the records in my office. Witness the seal of this State at Montpelier the day and year above written.

William Slade, Jun.

II

AGES OF THE FOUNDERS IN 1818

| | |
|-------------|----|
| Burton | 66 |
| Buckingham | 60 |
| Hammond | 58 |
| Reed | 52 |
| Heaton | 50 |
| Fitch | 38 |
| Bartholomew | 35 |
| Short | 32 |
| Kendrick | 31 |

III

CURRICULUM 1842

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

First Year

Adams' Arithmetic, Kirkham's Grammar, Geography, with Mitchell's Outline Maps, Worcester's Elements or Tytler's Universal History, commenced, Watts' Improvement of the Mind, Comstock's Philosophy, Lincoln's Botany, Davies' First Lessons in Algebra, Preston's Book-keeping; Reading and Orthography through the year.

Second Year.

Grammar reviewed, Davies' First Lessons finished, Tytler's History finished, Newman's Rhetoric, Astronomy, Burrett's Geography of the Heavens, Smellie's Philosophy of Natural History, Davies' Legendre four books, Olmstead's Philosophy, Political Class Book, Surveying.

Third Year.

Davies' Bourdon, Davies' Legendre continued, Abercrombie's Intellectual Philosophy, Wayland's Moral Philosophy, Whateley's Logic, Paley's Natural Theology, Young, Bakewell's Geology; Composition and Declamation through the Course.

One hundred ninety-eight

CLASSICAL DEPARTMENT.

First Year.

Andrews' and Stoddard's Latin Grammar, Andrews' Latin Reader, Leverett's Latin Tutor, Caesar's Commentaries, Anthon's Sallust, Crosby's Greek Grammar, Jacob's Greek Reader, Leverett's Lexicon, Davies' First Lessons in Algebra.

Second Year.

Greek Grammar and Reader continued, Donnegan's Greek Lexicon, Anthon's Cicero, Davies' Bourdon through Equations of the First Degree.

Third Year.

Virgil, Greek Reader completed, Greek Testament, Newman's Rhetoric, Davies' Bourdon, Davies' Legendre four books, Ancient History and Geography; Written Translations from Latin into English; Composition and Declamation through the course.

Modern Languages.

Bolmar's Levizac's Grammar, La Vie de Washington, The History of Charles XII, Le Brun's Telemaque, Bolmar's Colloquial Phrase-Book, Boyer's Dictionary, Fowle's First Class Reader.

IV

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF PRINCIPALS*

| | | |
|----------------------------|------------|-----------|
| 1. Fitch, John | Brown | 1819-1825 |
| 2. Smith, Carlos | Union | 1825-1827 |
| 3. Marsh, Abram | Dartmouth | 1827-1828 |
| 4. Hopkins, Charles | " " | 1828 |
| 5. Long, Samuel | " " | 1829 |
| 6. Dana, William C. | " " | 1829 |
| 7. Piper, Sherburne B. | " " | 1829 |
| 8. Coburn, Loammi S. | " " | 1830 |
| 9. Burke, William C.* | " " | 1832 |
| 10. Shipherd, James K.* | Middlebury | 1832-1833 |
| 11. Chapman, Jacob* | Dartmouth | 1833-1834 |
| 12. Richards, Jonas DeF.* | " " | 1834-1835 |
| 13. Pierce, Samuel | " " | 1835-1836 |
| 14. Marsh, Eliezer J. | Middlebury | 1837-1840 |
| 15. Baldwin, Cyrus | Dartmouth | 1840 |
| 16. Stanyan, John E. | " " | 1840-1841 |
| 17. Orcutt, Hiram | " " | 1842-1855 |
| 18. Hood, Gilbert E. | " " | 1855-1858 |
| 19. Bartholomew, George K. | " " | 1858-1859 |
| 20. Hazen, William S. | U. of Vt. | 1859-1860 |
| 21. Little, Charles | Dartmouth | 1860-1861 |
| 22. Little, Arthur | " " | 1861 |

One hundred ninety-nine

| | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| 23. Norton, John W. | U. of Vt. | 1861-1862 |
| 24. French, George H. | Dartmouth | 1863-1865 |
| 25. { Tenney, Leonard | | |
| 26. { Worcester, Ezra | Trustees | 1865 |
| 27. Howe, Alvah S. | Amherst | 1865-1866 |
| 28. Chandler, Charles H.* | Dartmouth | 1866 |
| 29. Patterson, John H.* | " " | 1866-1867 |
| 30. Chase, Charles P. | " " | 1868-1869 |
| 31. Wardwell, John H.* | " " | 1868 |
| 32. Barber, Theodore M.* | " " | 1869 |
| 33. Turner, David | " " | 1869-1871 |
| 34. Turner, Charles | Williams | 1881 |
| 35. Weld, Benjamin M. | Middlebury | 1881-1884 |
| 36. Cummings, William H. | Dartmouth | 1884-1888 |
| 37. Mallory, Julius N. | Middlebury | 1888-1891 |
| 38. Newell, Fred W. | Bates | 1891-1896 |
| 39. Westfall, Franklin N. | U. of Indiana | 1896-1898 |
| 40. Dunham, Herman | Bowdoin | 1898-1899 |
| 41. Bowdish, Luman R. | Albany, N. Y. Normal | 1899-1905 |
| 42. Childs, James R. | Amherst | 1905-1908 |
| 43. Guild, Charles A. | " " | 1908-1909 |
| 44. Junkins, Charles E. | Bates | 1909-1911 |
| 45. Paulsen, George | U. of Mass. | 1911-1912 |
| 46. Slade, William | Dartmouth | 1912-1917 |
| 47. Tupper, Leland E. | U. of Vt. | 1917-1919 |

The dates are only approximately accurate. It should be remembered that some of the principals served only a few weeks, or one term.

*Undergraduate.

V

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF PRINCIPALS

- Baldwin, Cyrus, b. Antrim, N. H., May 14, 1811; d. Hill, N. H. 1893, May 30. Dartmouth 1839. Teacher and business.
- Barber, Theodore Moses, b. Epping, N. H., 1846, Sept. 12; d. Pittsburgh, Pa. 1915, Nov. 24. Dartmouth, 1870. Teacher.
- Bartholomew, George Kelham, b. Hartford, Vt., 1835, July 4; d. Cincinnati, O., 1917, Oct. 4. Dartmouth 1858. Teacher.
- Bowdish, Luman R., b. Root, Montgomery Co., N. Y. 1863, Nov. 25; d.? Albany (N. Y.) Normal School, 1889. Teacher.
- Burke, William Craige, b. Woodstock, Vt., 1812, Feb. 19; d. Cheyenne, Wyo. 1902, May 24. Dartmouth 1833; Andover Sem., 1838; M.D. Univ. of N. Y. 1845.
- Chandler, Charles Henry, b. New Ipswich, N. H., 1840, Oct. 25; d. Leominster, Mass., 1912, Mar. 29. Dartmouth 1868. Teacher.
- Chase, Charles Parker, b. West Newbury, Mass., 1845, May 6; d. Hanover, N. H., 1923, Aug. 10. Dartmouth 1869. Teacher, Treasurer of Dartmouth.

Childs, James Richmond, b. Newbury, Mass., 1880, July 5; Amherst, 1903. Teacher, School Superintendent.

Coburn, Loammi Sewall, b. Salem, Mass., 1808, Sept. 7; d. Weston, Vt., 1885, Mar. 16. Dartmouth, 1830. Andover Sem., 1835.

Cummings, William Henry, b. Dunham, Quebec, 1852, Aug. 30; d. Brattleboro, Vt., 1915, Aug. 2. Dartmouth 1879. Teacher.

Dana, William Coombs, b. Newburyport, Mass., 1810, Feb. 13; d. Charleston, S. C., 1880, Nov. 30. Dartmouth, 1828. Princeton Theol. Sem., 1835.

Dunham, Herman Nelson, b. Freeport, Me., 1860, Dec. 14; d. Henniker, N. H., 1923, Jan. 14. Bowdoin, 1885. Teacher.

Fitch, John, b. Hopkinton, Mass.; d. Guildhall, Vt., 1827, Dec. 18. Brown, 1790. Clergyman and teacher.

French, George Henry, b. Candia, N. H., 1838, July 27; d. Westmoreland, N. H., 1906, Oct. 2. Dartmouth, 1863. Andover Sem., 1868.

Guild, Charles Alvan, b. Walpole, Mass., 1861, Sept. 22; d. Chatham, Mass., 1942, July 29. Amherst, 1886. Teacher.

Hazen, William Skinner, b. Hartford, Vt., 1836, Aug. 18; d. Beverly, Mass., 1911, Oct. 31. Univ. of Vt., 1858. Andover, Sem., 1863.

Hood, Gilbert Edward, b. Chelsea, Vt., 1824, Nov. 21; d. Lawrence, Mass., 1904, Nov. 12. Dartmouth 1851. Lawyer and Banker.

Hopkins, Charles, b. Hartford, Conn., 1805, Mar. 28; d. Pikes Peak, Col., 1864. Dartmouth, 1827. Lawyer.

Howe, Alvah Sereno, b. Gardner, Mass., 1837, Aug. 13; d. Woonsocket, R. I., 1877, Sept. 4. Amherst, 1862. M. A. 1865. Teacher.

Junkins, Charles E., b. York Center, Me., 1878, Jan. 23; d. ? Bates, 1905. Boston Univ. Law School, 1908. Teacher and lawyer.

Little, Arthur, b. Boscawen, N. H., 1837, May 24; d. W. Newton, Mass., 1915, Apr. 11. Dartmouth 1860, Andover and Princeton Seminaries.

Little, Charles, b. Boscawen, N. H., 1837, Feb. 14; d. Acton, Mass., 1869, Nov. 16. Dartmouth, 1830. Physician.

Mallory, Julius Nathan, b. Sudbury, Vt., 1840, Jan. 30; d. Scituate, Mass., 1901, Mar. 30. Middlebury, 1871. Teacher.

Newell, Fred Webster, b. Durham, Me., 1865, Nov. 22; d. Youngstown, Ohio, 1938, Feb. 3. Bates, 1889. Univ. of Michigan, 1898. Teacher, Electrical Engineer.

Norton, John Wright, b. Mooretown, Vt., 1839, Aug. 27; d. State of Vera Cruz, Mexico, 1900, Jan. 21. Univ. of Vt., 1861. Merchant.

Orcutt, Hiram, b. Acworth, N. H., 1815, Feb. 3; d. Brookline, Mass. 1899, Ap. 17. Dartmouth, 1842. Teacher. Head of N. E. Bureau of Education.

- Paulsen, George W., b. New York City, 1888, Jan. 29; d. Englewood, N. J., 1952. Univ. of Mass., 1911. Teacher.
- Patterson, John Henry, b. Dayton, Ohio, 1854, Dec. 13; d. Kirkwood, N. J. Dartmouth, 1867. Business.
- Pierce, Samuel, b. Haverhill, Mass., 1816, July 16; d. Atkinson, N. H., 1844, Mar. 27. Dartmouth, 1835. Andover Sem., 1840.
- Piper, Sherburne Blake, b. Northwood, N. H., May 30; d. Lewiston, N. Y., 1885, Sept. 20. Dartmouth, 1832. Lawyer.
- Richards, Jonas DeForest, b. Hartford, Vt., Dec. 28; d. Mobile, Ala., 1872, Dec. 2. Dartmouth, 1836. Andover Sem., 1840. Teacher. Clergyman.
- Shipherd, James Kent, b. about 1810; d. Thetford, 1834, Feb. 17, aged 24. Undergraduate member of the class of 1832, Middlebury.
- Slade, William, b. Thetford, Vt., 1856, Dec. 13; d. Hanover, N. H., 1948, July 17. Dartmouth, 1884. Andover Sem., 1887.
- Smith, Carlos, b. 1801, July 17; d. Akron, O., 1877, Apr. 22. Union College, 1822. Clergyman.
- Stanyan, John Edward, b. Pembroke, N. H., 1816, May 17; d. Pembroke, N. H. 1870, Mar. 20. Dartmouth, 1840. Lawyer.
- Tenney, Rev. Leonard, b. Groton, N. H., 1814, July 7; d. Windham, N. H., 1869, Sept. 19. Dartmouth, 1840. Andover Sem., 1844. Current pastor of the Thetford church. Associate of Dr. Worcester.
- Tupper, Leland Ellis, b. Blakersfield, Vt., 1856, Mar. 12; d. Hiawatha, Kan., 1938, May 27. U. of Vt., 1880. Teacher and preacher.
- Turner, David, b. Lyme, N. H., 1815, Dec. 9; d. Thetford, Vt., 1882, Aug. 9. Dartmouth, 1841. Teacher.
- Turner, Charles Humphrey, b. Richmond, Va., 1860, Oct. 28; d. Worcester, Mass., 1907, May 28. Williams, 1881. Harvard, M.D., 1898.
- Wardwell, John Henry, b. Sanbornton, N. H., 1844, June 11; d. Williamstown, Mass., 1894, July 23. Dartmouth, 1870. Teacher.
- Westfall, Franklin Miller, b. Miller's Mills, N. Y., 1854, Mar. 4; d. Trumansburg, N. Y., 1924, Oct. 28. Albany, (N. Y.) Normal School, 1877. University of Indiana, 1896. Teacher.
- Weld, Benjamin, b. Groton, Vt., 1851, June 22; d. Savannah, Ga., 1911, Feb. 20. Middlebury, 1877. Teacher.
- Worcester, Ezra Carter, b. Peacham, Vt., 1816, Feb. 28; d. Thetford, Vt., 1887, July 29. Dartmouth Medical School, 1838. Associate of Leonard Tenney.

VI TRUSTEES

The trustees were largely local, most of those from outside the town being alumni or nearby clergymen. The Hill pastors usually served while they were in residence. Permanent residents often served for long terms, sometimes thirty or forty years. The following list is approximately chronological and is gleaned from records, catalogues, programs, and bills. The dates indicate that the men were known to have served at that time, and many of those after 1844 being the recorded dates of their election. The following key will indicate their residence and suggests that they were careful to elect men from the various villages of the town.

Thetford includes five and a half villages.

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| T | Thetford Hill |
| TC | Thetford Center |
| TN | North Thetford |
| TE | East Thetford |
| TPM | Post Mills village |
| UV | Union Village, half of which lies in Thetford |
| | |
| L | Lyme, N. H. |
| St. | Strafford |
| N | Norwich |
| DC | Dartmouth College |
| O | Orford, N. H. |
| F | Fairlee |
| WF | West Fairlee |
| | |

Named on the charter, Nov. 1819

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|------|
| Rev. Asa Burton | T | |
| Judge Simeon Short | T | |
| Judge Jedediah P. Buckingham | T | |
| Dr. Thomas Kendrick | T | |
| Judge Joseph Reed | T | |
| Col. Lyman Fitch | T | |
| Timothy P. Bartholomew | TN | |
| William Heaton | T | |
| Dr. Elijah Hammond | TC | |
| | | |
| Rev. Charles White | T | 1827 |
| Rev. Baxter Perry | L | 1827 |
| Rev. Joseph Tracy | TPM | 1827 |
| Dr. David Palmer | T | 1827 |

Abiathar G. Britton O 1827
 Presbury West Jr. T 1827
 Rev. Elijah G. Babcock T 1831
 Rev. Erdix Tenney L 1835
 Capt. William H. Latham TN
 1835
 Dr. Nathaniel White T 1836
 Abijah Howard, Jr., T 1837
 Enoch Slade T 1839
 Prof. Alpheus Crosby DC 1839
 Prof. Ira Young DC 1839
 Rev. Daniel Campbell O 1839
 Morrill J. Walker UV 1840
 Dr. Heman H. Niles TPM 1843
 Dr. Samuel W. Thayer, Jr. T
 1846
 Dr. Ezra C. Worcester T 1847
 Rev. Timothy F. Clary T 1850
 George Denny, Westboro, Mass.
 1850
 Hubbard Winslow, Boston 1852
 Davis Johnson, N. Y. city 1852
 John Lougee T 1852
 Charles White, Worcester, Mass.
 1855
 Gilbert Hood T 1855
 Samuel Fletcher T 1857
 Bela Child TE 1858
 David W. Closson TN 1858
 Rev Leonard Tenney T 1857
 Solomon G. Heaton TPM 1861
 Ralph E. Hosford TE 1862
 Jonathan Farr T 1861
 Willard W. Baker T 1861
 William Slade T 1863
 Rev. Moses T. Runnels O 1864
 Henry C. Hatch ST 1865
 Rev. Isaac Hosford TN 1865
 Harlan P. Closson T 1865
 Rev. Augustus Chandler ST 1866
 Rev. William Sewell N 1866
 Solon K. Berry T 1867
 Rev. Henry A. Hazen L 1868
 Prof. Henry E. Parker DC 1868
 Judge Samuel M. Gleason TC
 1868
 Rev. Richard T. Searle T 1868
 Benjamin Frost T 1870
 Henry M. Latham T 1872

Rev. Charles F. Morse T 1875
 Harlan P. Cummings T 1879
 Edwin P. George WF 1879
 Jonathan J. Conant TE 1880
 William L. Murfey TN 1880
 Solon G. Smith TPM 1881
 Rev. Harry Brickett T 1882
 William H. Long F 1882
 Rev. Henry Cummings ST 1883
 William A. Dodge TPM 1883
 Fred E. Garey T 1886
 George S. Worcester T 1886
 Amburg V. Turner UV 1887
 Dr. Heman H. Gillett TPM 1887
 Rev. Samuel V. McDuffee T
 1891
 Prof. T. W. D. Worthen DC 1891
 Dr. William L. Paine T 1891
 Thomas W. Bicknell, Providence
 1892
 Gen. John Eaton, Washington
 1892
 Frank P. Goulden Boston 1893
 Gilbert E. Hood, Lawrence 1894
 Samuel Buell ST 1896
 Rev. Avery E. Lambert T 1898
 Arthur S. Colton T 1898
 Myron S. Colburn UV 1900
 Harris M. Miller WF 1900
 Rev. Edmund F. Slafter, Boston
 1901
 Rev. Achilles L. Loder T 1903
 Harley C. Sanborn TE 1903
 Clinton O. Andrews, Lawrence
 1905
 Rev. William Slade T 1907
 Charles S. Wilmot (town) 1907
 William Davis (town) 1907
 Dr. Leon B. Allen (town) 1907
 Linwood Taft TPM 1908
 Ernest C. Bond T 1908
 Henry F. Wilcox TN 1909
 Arthur B. Palmer TN 1910
 Charles C. Emerson TE 1910
 Prof. Charles P. Chase DC 1911
 George Cook (town) 1911
 William E. Tucker (town) 1914
 Rev. Leland E. Tupper (town)
 1915

Ellsworth H. Sargent (town) 1916
Don C. Bliss
Prof. Charles H. Farnsworth,
N. Y. city 1916
Charles A. Wilcox TN 1917.

VII

THE CHRONICLER

1. Ho! all ye inhabitants of Thetford, draw near; yea, give ear, and listen unto me, and I will speak concerning the mighty Seminary founded in your midst.

2. I will declare how that in the days of Asa the high priest, the hearts of your fathers were pained as they looked upon their children, and saw that they were devoid of knowledge.

3. Therefore they said, Let us arise and build an Academy, wherein our children and our children's children may learn the things hard to be understood; and they did so.

4. Now when the mighty building was completed, they spake among themselves, saying,

5. Whom shall we find, wherein dwelleth wisdom sufficient to stand up and teach in this house that we have made,

6. And they sent and found one John, a learned man, and set him upon the chief seat, and said unto him,

7. Behold, we commit unto thee our children; see to it that thou teachest them all wisdom.

8. And he abode with them three years, and made a very great exhibition; and there were found there those who spake seven different tongues.

9. After this he tarried yet other three years and departed.

10. Then sought they for another, and found one Carlos; but when he had staid with them two years, he also departed, and Abram stood up in his stead.

11. Howbeit he dwelt in the land but for the space of one year and nine months.

12. Then came Samuel; but after three months he also went away.

13. Then said William, I will aspire to thine office; but it came to pass after one year and three months that they let him go, and chose one surnamed Coburn.

14. In his days Asa the high priest died at a good old age, and was gathered to his fathers;

15. And all the people made a very great mourning for him, and wept sore, and cried, saying, Alas! my father!

16. Now after the death of Asa, Coburn went away, and one Piper came and established himself among the people for the space of six months;

17. At the end of which time he arose and went into a far country, and one William, called also Bush, came unto them; but after three months he departed. (See Note 1.)

18. Then came James, a good man, and one who was in favor with the people; but at the end of one year and nine months a sickness fell upon him and he died.

19. Then said they unto DeForest, Wilt thou come and sit upon the chief seat of our mighty Seminary? and he answered, I will come. So he came.

20. Nevertheless, when he had remained with them twenty and four months, he found it in his heart to remove to a country that lieth a little to the south.

21. Then it came to pass that Eliezer, a just man and wise, took pity on them, and came and remained two years and nine months and ten days.

22. And then a dissension arose between him and certain nobles of the land; so they drove him away, and he went into a far country.

23. Howbeit when he had gone away, he sent epistles unto them, thanking them for the deed that they had done, inasmuch as the country whither he had gone was exceeding pleasant.

24. But in process of time the people found one Thomas who tarried with them foreshore and ten days, and then took his journey to the land whither De Forest had gone. (See Note 2.)

25. Then came Edward, of whom I forbear to speak, save that when two years and four months had fully passed, the people let him go.

26. Then they searched through the length and breadth of the land, and found one of the sons of the prophets, Hiram by name.

27. Now when they looked upon him, they were greatly pleased, for he was of a goodly countenance, and higher from the shoulders and upward than any of the people.

28. And in process of time there were gathered together very many of the youth and maidens from the surrounding nations to be taught by him;

29. For his fame had spread abroad, and the man waxed mighty.

30. Therefore the elders assembled together, and spake among themselves after this wise, saying,

31. Have ye considered this man, that there is none like him in all the land?

32. Come, therefore, let us make a league with him, that he may remain with us forever.

33. Now the rest of the chronicles of the deeds of the children of Thetford, behold! are they not written in the book of the memory of your fathers, and your fathers' fathers?

NOTES

1. This should be Burke.

2. Thomas has not been identified. According to Slafter's list, Cyrus Baldwin, Jacob Chapman, and Samuel Peirce are omitted here.

